

AFRICAN SOLDIER
AFRICAN

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ATTITUDE ABOUT SLAVERY

Slavery

Attitudes about Slavery

African-American Soldiers

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

Re: *Transcript Aug. 11, 1864* ✓

WHAT TO DO WITH THE NEGROES. General Philip Kearney, the hero of his division on the Peninsula, has written a letter on the negro-arming question, which will attract attention. The New York World gives the following extracts from this letter:

But besides *drafting*, it is time for us to deprive the enemy of their extraneous engines of war. There is no more Southern man at heart than myself. I am so from education, associations, and from being a purely unprejudiced lover of the Union. But this is now no longer time for hesitation. As the blacks are the rural military force of the South, so should they indiscriminately be received, if not seized and sent off. I would not arm them, but I would use them to spare our whites, needed with their colors; needed to *drill*, that first source of discipline—that first utility in battle. But in furtherance of this, instead of the usual twenty pioneers per regiment, I would select fifty stalwart blacks; give them the axe, the pick, and the spade. But give them high military organization. We want bands—give us twenty blacks—again military organization. So, too, cooks for the companies—teamsters—even artillery drivers.

Do not stop there—and always *without arms*—organize engineer regiments of blacks for the fortifications—pontoon regiments of blacks—black hospital corps of nurses. Put this in practice, and the day, that from European interference, we have to look *bitterness* nearly in the face—*then*, and not till then, awoken to the conviction that you have an army of over fifty thousand *highly* disciplined soldiery—superior to double the number of our ordinary run of badly disciplined, badly officered, unreliable regiments now intrusted with the fortunes of the North. I would seek French officers for them, from their peculiar gift over “natives.” In their own service they easily beat the Arabs—and then officer them and surpass their own troops in desperate valor; also, I should advise some Jamaica sergeants of the black regiments. As to the women—employ them in hospitals, and in making cartridges, &c.

I know the Southern character intimately. It is not truly brave. It is at times desperate, invincible if successful—most dispirited if the reverse—intimidated at a distant idea, which they would encounter, if suddenly brought to them, face to face. This idea of black adjuncts to the military awakes nothing inhuman. It but prevents the slave, run away or abandoned to us, from becoming a moneyed pressure upon us. It eventually would prepare them for freedom—for surely we do not intend to give them up to their rebel masters. In fine, why have we even now many old soldiers on the frontier garrisons? Send there a black regiment on trial—not at once, but gradually—by the process named above. Do this, and besides acquiring a strong provisional army, you magnify your present one by over fifty thousand men.

ARMING THE SLAVES. A gentleman of Berkshire county informs us that a respectable neighbor of his lately returned from living with his children in Tennessee, and reports that when the news arrived there of the President's call for 300,000 more volunteers, it was the common talk of the rebels that they should proceed to arm their slaves, putting one negro between every two white men. [N. Y. Independent.]

B. Transcribed

Sept 1, 1862

Washington, Aug. 4, 1862

My Dear Sir:

A most mischievous movement is on foot here, and I hope you will at once your influence with the President to put it down in the embryo. It is a scheme to organize a Negro Regiment in this district!

Apart from the fact that it would be a virtual acknowledgment that the whites are unable to defend the National Capital, it is offensive to every conservative Union man, and will give the leaders of the Rebellion a new argument against Reconstruction.

It will lead to a war of races, and the Government will find trouble nearer at home than it is at present. It is the suggestion of Radicals, who favor the equality of negroes with whites. I consider it among the worst signs of the times. It will give wicked negroes the means of vengeance upon their

late masters, and lead to assassinations
and open murders.

It will have the effect to drive all
the border States to an interminable
resistance, for it will confirm them
in the belief that there is a deter-
mination to excite a servile war in
the slaveholding regions.

If this be tolerated at the seat
of Government, with what grace can it
be claimed that the war is for a
restoration of the Union.

The white men of the country
will not rally to the standard of the
Union, if they are to be mixed
up with negro battalions.

The leaders deserve to lose
their slaves as a consequence of
their folly, but it will not do to make
emancipation an object of the
struggle. The North & West will
be divided, if this folly be persisted
in. Truly yours,

Wm. R. Thompson. Jas. S. Gallahan

PRESIDENT LINCOLN ON THE WAR.

In a speech at Washington President Lincoln said —“There are but few views or aspects of this great war upon which I have not said or written something whereby my own opinion might be known. But there is one—the recent attempt of our erring brethren, as they are sometimes called—(laughter)—to employ the negro to fight for them. I have neither written nor made a speech on that subject, because that was their business, not mine; and if I had a wish upon the subject I had not the power to introduce it or make it effective. The great question with them was whether the negro, being put into the army, would fight for them. I do not know, and therefore cannot decide. (Laughter.) They ought to know better than we. I have in my lifetime heard many arguments why the negroes ought to be slaves; but if they fight for those who would keep them in slavery it will be a better argument than any I have yet heard. (Laughter and applause.) He who will fight for that ought to be a slave. (Applause.) They have concluded at last to take one out of four of the slaves, and put them in the army; and that one out of the four who will fight to keep the others in slavery ought to be a slave himself unless he is killed in a fight. (Applause.) While I have often said that all men ought to be free, yet I would allow those coloured persons to be slaves who want to be; and next to them those white persons who argue in favour of making other people slaves. (Applause.) I am in favour of giving an opportunity to such white men to try it on for themselves. (Applause.) I will say one thing in regard to the negro being employed to fight for them. I do know he cannot fight and stay at home and make bread too—(laughter and applause)—and as one is about as important as the other to them, I don't care which they do. (Renewed applause.) I am rather in favour of having them try them as soldiers. (Applause.) They lack one vote of doing that, and I wish I could send my vote over the river, so that I might cast it in favour of allowing the negro to fight. (Applause.) But they cannot fight and work both. We must now see the bottom of the enemy's resources. They will stand out as long as they can, and if the negro will fight for them they must allow him to fight. They have drawn upon their last branch of resources. (Applause.) And we can now see the bottom. (Applause.) I am glad to see the end so near at hand. (Applause.) I have said now more than I intended, and will therefore bid you good-bye.”

Glasgow Weekly Herald

May 26, 1865



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NEGRO IN WAR COMMENDED

Vice President Tells Of Good Record

By the Associated Press

TUSKEGEE, Ala., Feb. 12.

America stands unchangeably committed to the principle of the right to individual freedom, made forever plain and clear by Abraham Lincoln, Vice President Calvin Coolidge declared today in an address dedicating the Government hospital for negro veterans of the World war.

"The life of Abraham Lincoln," he said, "gave a new and practical meaning to the right of self government which was to grow into a great world of influence. Americans are not without justification in assuming that this nation has been called into existence to establish, to maintain, to defend and to extend that principle. In so far as the World war was a conflict between different theories of civilization, it was a conflict of those who supported this principle and those who opposed it. It was the liberty loving nations of the earth, those most generously committed to the principle of sovereignty of the people, who were victorious.

"In that victory Abraham Lincoln had a very large share.

"Freedom places grave duties and responsibilities on the individuals which will bring success if met and performed, but failure if neglected and evaded," the vice president asserted.

"It was the belief of Abraham Lincoln," he continued, "that all people could and would finally rise to these requirements. In less than 70 years that the negro race in America has been in the enjoyment of freedom, they have made marvelous progress.

"When the call came in time of

war they were ready and desirous to respond. More than two and one quarter millions of them were registered under the selective draft. They were more anxious to enlist than they were to evade service for their country. Nearly four hundred thousand of them went into military service."

The total casualty of negro troops, he said, was approximately 103 officers and 1,543 enlisted men, of whom six officers and 203 enlisted men were killed in action. Fourteen negro officers and 43 enlisted men won the distinguished service cross.

FROM THE TRIBUNE'S COLUMNS

65 YEARS AGO TODAY

AUGUST 6, 1862.

WASHINGTON, D. C.—Secretary Stanton, by direction of President Lincoln, issued an order exempting all persons actually employed in constructing and operating telegraph lines from military service under the call for 100,000 more soldiers.

WASHINGTON, D. C.—A delegation of western men, including two senators, called on President Lincoln and made an offer to furnish Negro regiments. He told them that he had decided not to arm Negroes. Mr. Lincoln was plied with arguments against his decision and discussion gradually grew more heated. "Gentlemen, you have my decision," the President said. "I have made my mind up deliberately and mean to adhere to it. It embodies my best judgment, and if the people are dissatisfied, I will resign and let Mr. Hamlin try it." To this one of the visitors replied: "I hope in God's name, Mr. President, you will." The heat of the discussion seems to have arisen from the feeling that the President was drawing back from the ground his visitors thought he had given them reason to believe he occupied. The President's refusal to accept Negro troops excites surprise among parties interested in Gen. Jim Lane's plan to enlist Negroes in Kansas. Lane has stated positively that the administration understood his intentions. If that be correct, Gen. Lane must have been treated in bad faith.

CHICAGO.—Up to 4 o'clock yesterday the war committee of the Cook county board of supervisors had paid \$21,000 in bounties to 350 recruits.

AN ANECDOTE OF LINCOLN

In each issue of the Week By Week from boyhood to his death. Save each copy. You will have anecdotes and illustrations that when put together will give you a very wonderful story of the life of the immortal savior of our country.

THE HON. FREDERICK DOUGLASS TELLS OF AN INTERVIEW WITH LINCOLN

The well-known Frederick Douglass, in the North Western Advocate, says:

"I saw and conversed with this great man for the first time in the darkest hours of the military situation when the armies of the rebellion seemed more confident, defiant and aggressive than ever.

"I had never before had an interview with a President of the United States, and though I felt that I had something important to say, considering his exalted position and my lowly origin and the people whose cause I came to plead, I approached him with trepidation as to how this great man might receive me; but one word and look from him banished all my tears and set me perfectly at ease. I have often said since that meeting that it was much easier to see and converse with a great man than it was with a small man.

"On that occasion he said:

"Douglass, you need not tell me who you are, Mr. Seward has told me all about you."

"I then saw that there was no reason to tell him my personal story, however, interesting it might be to myself or others, so I told him at once the object of my visit. It was to get some expression from him upon three points:

- "1. Equal pay to colored soldiers.
- "2. Their promotion when they had earned it on the battle-field.
- "3. Should they be taken prisoners and enslaved or hanged, as Jefferson Davis had threatened, an equal number of Confederate prisoners should be executed within our lines.

"A declaration to that effect I thought would prevent the execution of the rebel threat. To all but the last President Lincoln assented. He argued, however, that neither equal pay nor promotion could be granted at once. He said that in view of existing prejudices it was a great step forward to employ colored troops at all; that it was necessary to avoid everything that would offend this prejudice and increase opposition to the measure.

"He detailed the steps by which white soldiers were reconciled to the employ-

ment of colored troops; how these were first employed as laborers; how it was thought they should not be armed or uniformed like white soldiers; how they should be made to wear a peculiar uniform; how they should be employed to hold forts and arsenals in sickly locations, and not enter the field like other soldiers.

"With all these restrictions and limitations he easily made me see that much would be gained when the colored man loomed before the country as a full-fledged United States soldier to fight, flourish or fail in defense of the united republic. The great soul of Lincoln halted only when he came to the point of retaliation.

"The thought of hanging men in cold blood, even though the rebels should murder a few of the colored prisoners, was a horror from which he shrank.

"Oh, Douglass! I cannot do that. If I could get hold of the actual murderers of colored prisoners, I would retaliate; but to hang those who have no hand in such murders, I cannot."

"The contemplation of such an act brought to his countenance such an expression of sadness and pity that it made it hard for me to press my point, though I told him it would tend to save rather than destroy life. He, however, insisted that this work of blood, once begun, would be hard to stop—that such violence would beget violence. He argued more like a disciple of Christ than a commander-in-chief of the army and navy of a warlike nation already involved in a terrible war.

"How sad and strange the fate of this great and good man, the savior of his country, the embodiment of human charity, whose heart, though strong, was as tender as a heart of childhood; who always tempered justice with mercy; who sought to supplant the sword with counsel of reason, to suppress passion by kindness and moderation; who had a sigh for every human grief and a tear for every human woe, should at last perish by the hand of a desperate assassin, against whom no thought of malice had ever entered his heart!"



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House of Representatives

Abe Lincoln In Humboldt

EXTENSION OF REMARKS
OF

HON. DON H. CLAUSEN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 23, 1965

Mr. DON H. CLAUSEN. Mr. Speaker, in the wake of the Lincoln's Birthday celebration throughout the United States, a daily newspaper in my district, the Humboldt Standard, published an editorial that I felt was most fitting. While this area is still reeling economically from the major blow dealt by December floods, it paused to give recognition to a situation of which Abraham Lincoln would be very proud. With unanimous consent I place this editorial in the Record so that it may be appreciated by all:

ABE LINCOLN IN HUMBOLDT

In the little valley of Nolin's Creek, a few miles from Hodgenville, Ky., on this date in the year 1809, a boy was born in a small, makeshift cabin. Tom and Nancy Lincoln named him Abraham.

The little three-sided log cabin still stands, sheltered now by a marble monument.

One hundred years ago, on April 14, 1865, Abraham Lincoln was martyred in Ford's Theater in Washington, D.C. One century—and "the great task remaining before us" still remains, especially in the Deep South.

But Abraham Lincoln must have observed, from his present vantage place the realization of his dreams with the presence here for the past 7 weeks of the details from the 6th Army.

The commanding officer of the Helicopter Control Center here, and of all helicopter operations, was Col. Charles Bussey—a Negro who is also an officer and a gentleman. Other Negro officers, and some of other races, gave orders to white junior officers and enlisted men. Those orders were obeyed, not

only without question, but without resentment or hesitancy.

The color line has vanished.

All of the Negro officers and enlisted men who served here in the fully integrated command were received by Humboldt County residents not only as saviors, but as welcome guests.

We can only wonder what would have happened had this disaster struck Mississippi and Alabama, with the same rescue units sent to save the populace there?

All of America can take a lesson from the men of the 6th Army.

Abraham Lincoln would have understood, and been grateful.

He could not help but be gratified that his name remains, a century later a symbol of freedom, compassion and selfless dedication to his country.

He could understand better than most that the President of the United States must be resigned to ceaseless criticism and open hostility even as he receives worldwide recognition of his leadership and power.

He might find comfort in seeing that after generations of stagnation the great issue which split the Nation in his day is at last being resolved at an ever-quicken pace.

And in his wisdom he would comprehend that the differences which now confuse his country and engulf the world can in truth be composed through the same patient understanding and love of fellow men that have made Abraham Lincoln timeless and immortal.

A grateful nation again observes the birthday of a giant. It does it with respect and reverence, regardless of race, creed, or politics.





Lincoln Lore

March, 1973

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Number 1621

THE PRESIDENT AND THE HISTORIAN: LINCOLN AND GEORGE LIVERMORE

Just as the contemporary interest in civil rights has had its effects upon living historians, guiding them to write on once neglected subjects, so an earlier era of interest in civil rights had its effects upon the subject matter of historical research. The Civil War directed the interests of George Livermore (1809-1865), a frail Massachusetts antiquarian and book collector, to the subject of the "Opinions of the Founders of the Republic on Negroes as Slaves, as Citizens, and as Soldiers." Some of the things that Livermore discovered by careful research in the published writings of the founding fathers and in the manuscript collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society may well have startled members of that Society present when, on August 14, 1862, he read his paper concerning the racial attitudes of that first generation of Americans. Indeed, some of his discoveries made over a hundred years ago would be news to historical societies today.

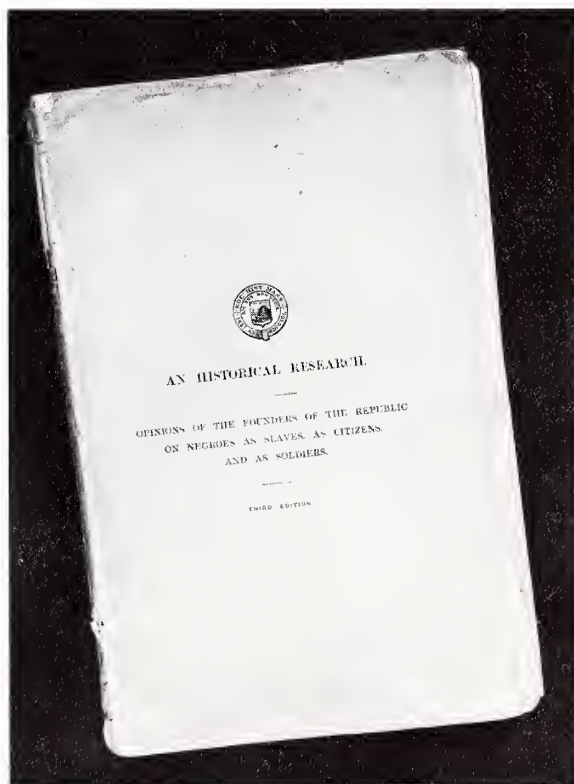
Livermore's *Historical Research*, as he called the published version of the paper he read to the Massachusetts Historical Society, is of special interest to Lincoln students because Abraham Lincoln apparently read Livermore's pamphlet—and at a critical time. Charles Sumner, the Republican Senator from Massachusetts, presented Lincoln with a copy of Livermore's *Historical Research* in November of 1862. The pamphlet is thought by some to have influenced Lincoln's decision, made between the issuance of the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation on September 22, 1862 and the official promulgation of the Proclamation on January 1, 1863, to include a paragraph endorsing the use of former slaves as soldiers in the Union Army. This opinion is strengthened by the fact that Lincoln consulted Charles Sumner about the final version of the Proclamation on Christmas Day, 1862. It is also added support by the story that George Livermore had Sumner give Lincoln a gold pen to sign the Proclamation which was returned to Livermore as a keepsake of the momentous historical event. In the editor's

opinion, the story is made even more plausible by the nature of Livermore's pamphlet itself.

Livermore's pamphlet had two parts. The first was concerned with the subject, "Negroes as Slaves and as Citizens," and consisted of lengthy quotations from the writings of the founding fathers loosely strung together by introductory remarks and brief comments by Livermore. But Livermore was no antiquarian, for he wrote about the past in order to influence the present and future:

In this time of our country's trial, when its Constitution, and even its continued national existence, is in peril, and the people are beginning to be aroused to the magnitude of the work to be done, all other subjects dwindle into comparative insignificance. Loyal men, of every calling in life, are laying aside their chosen and accustomed private pursuits, and devoting themselves, heart and hand, to the common cause. As true patriots, then, we, members of the MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY, should do something more than comply, as good citizens, with all the requirements of the Constitution and the laws: we must study, in the light of history, and by the traditions of those who originally founded and at first administered the Government, the fundamental principles on which it was based, and the paramount objects for which it was established. Having done this, it may not be amiss for us to offer the results of our historical researches to others not having the leisure or the opportunity to investigate for themselves.

Thus, although the pamphlet was laden with long extracts from original documents, it was really a tract for the times. Nor did Livermore hide behind historical objectivity: he said he was trying "to ascertain who have been unfaithful to the 'compromises of the Constitution,' and to the principles upon which the Union was based, and for which the Government was established." In other words,



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

Livermore read his paper before the Massachusetts Historical Society on August 14, 1862. He printed it at his own expense for gratuitous distribution as a paper read before the Society. The second edition was published in the *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*. The Lincoln Library and Museum's copy is a third edition published for the New England Loyal Publication Society in 1863 by A. Williams and Company. The New England Loyal Publication Society was the Boston counterpart of the Loyal Publication Society located in New York City. The Boston society printed broadsides mostly, rarely publishing pamphlets as the New York society did. However, John Murray Forbes, the wealthy Boston merchant who founded the New England group, was especially interested in the raising of black regiments; perhaps his interest helps explain their publishing Livermore's pamphlet.

Livermore was researching who was to blame for the Civil War.

The first section was therefore a commonplace, if at times artful, attempt to line the founding fathers up on the side of the North. Livermore began by refuting the contentions of the president of the Confederacy with the words of its vice-president, Alexander H. Stephens. Jefferson Davis had claimed that the North was unfaithful to the original compromises of the Constitution. Stephens had justified secession on other grounds:

The prevailing ideas entertained by . . . most of the leading statesmen at the time of the formation of the old Constitution, were, that the enslavement of the African was in violation of the laws of nature; that it was wrong in principle, socially, morally, and politically. It was an evil they knew not well how to deal with; but the general opinion of the men of that day was, that, somehow or other in the order of Providence, the institution would be evanescent, and pass away. This idea, though not incorporated in the Constitution, was the prevailing idea at the time. The Constitution, it is true, secured every essential guarantee to the institution while it should last; and hence no argument can be justly used against the constitutional guarantees thus secured, because of the common sentiment of the day. Those ideas, however, were fundamentally wrong. They rested upon the assumption of equality of races. This was an error. It was a sandy foundation; and the idea of a government built upon it,—when the "storm came and the wind blew, it fell."

Our new government is founded upon exactly the opposite ideas. Its foundations are laid, its cornerstone rests, upon the great truth, that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery, subordination to the superior race, is his natural and normal condition. This, our new government, is the first, in the history of the world, based upon this great physical, philosophical, and moral truth.

Having contradicted the Confederate president through the words of the Confederate vice-president, Livermore went on in the first section to document Stephens's assumption that the ideals of the Confederacy represented a radical break with the opinions of the founding fathers.

What followed was a fairly conventional documentation of the case for the founding fathers' having thought slavery a moral evil that should be put on the road to ultimate extinction as soon as possible. Such cases always relied heavily upon emphasizing the importance of the Declaration of Independence, which Livermore termed "The primal American Magna Charta," and attempting to explain the Constitution away. The latter argument depended on emphasizing that, as Livermore construed the preamble, "It was established for the purpose of securing liberty" It stressed also that the document did "not permit the word 'slave' anywhere to tarnish its text."

The argument relied heavily as well on the opinions that some of the men present at the constitutional convention expressed outside the document. Livermore could quote Northerners and Southerners alike on this question. Thus Benjamin Franklin wrote to a friend as early as 1773:

I have since had the satisfaction to learn that a disposition to abolish slavery prevails in North America; that many of the Pennsylvanians have set their slaves at liberty; and that even the Virginia Assembly have petitioned the king for permission to make a law for preventing the importation of more into that Colony. This request, however, will probably not be granted, as their former laws of that kind have always been repealed, and as the interests of a few merchants here has more weight with Government than that of thousands at a distance.

When he quoted George Washington, Livermore not only rested his case on the father of his country but on a prominent Virginian and slaveholder. Despite his economic stake in the institution, Washington thought that slavery should and would soon be abolished:

I hope it will not be conceived from these observations that it is my wish to hold the unhappy people, who are the subject of this letter, in slavery. I can only say, that there is not a man living who wishes more sincerely than I do to see some plan adopted for the abolition of it; but there is only one proper and effectual mode by which this can be accomplished, and that is by

legislative authority; and this, as far as my suffrage will go, shall never be wanting. [Washington to Robert Morris, April 12, 1786.]

The present prices of lands in Pennsylvania are higher than they are in Maryland and Virginia, although they are not of superior quality; [among other reasons] because there are laws here for the gradual [sic] abolition of slavery, which neither of the two States above mentioned have at present, but which nothing is more certain than they must have, and at a period not remote. [Washington to Sir John Sinclair, December 11, 1796.]

To Washington and Franklin, Livermore added John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, John Jay, Christopher Gadsden, Henry Laurens, and others; yet one stubborn fact remained: "But still, in three separate clauses, the Constitution recognizes the existence of slavery . . ." When talking about the Constitution, Livermore had ultimately to rely on things extra-constitutional, like "spirit":

One thing is certain, that . . . the common sentiment, in the Convention and throughout the country, was, that the letter and the spirit of the Constitution, fairly interpreted and faithfully applied, afforded a full guaranty of universal freedom throughout the Union at no distant day. The purpose of the Constitution was put into the preamble in no equivocal language, and for no doubtful purpose. It was "TO SECURE LIBERTY," and not to protect slavery . . .

I say that the above was a conventional argument, for it could be found in many ante-bellum anti-slavery speeches. In fact, one can find Abraham Lincoln using a very similar argument at the Cooper Institute in 1860. This, as much as anything else, makes the case for Livermore's influence on Lincoln convincing: Livermore's was just the sort of argument that Lincoln himself might have used.

In the Cooper Institute address, Lincoln attempted to turn the tables on Stephen Douglas, who always professed to abide by the compromises of the Constitution. Lincoln said he fully endorsed Douglas's assertion that, "Our fathers, when they framed the Government under which we live, understood this question just as well, and even better, than we do now." He went on to argue that, contrary to Douglas's belief, this dictated federal control of slavery in the territories. First he showed that twenty-three of the thirty-nine men who signed the Constitution were on record as having supported legislation like the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, in which Congress interfered with slavery in the territories. He argued, just as Livermore had by quoting Alexander Stephens, that "We stick to, contend for, the identical old policy on the point in controversy which was adopted by 'our fathers who framed the Government under which we live;' while you with one accord reject, and scout, and spit upon that old policy, and insist upon submitting something new." He pointed out "that neither the word 'slave' nor 'slavery' is to be found in the Constitution."

It was polemical ground that Lincoln had trod before, most notably in his speech at Peoria in 1854. There he had stressed that "the sheet anchor of American republicanism" was the Declaration of Independence and the statement that "the just powers of governments are derived from the consent of the governed." He had interpreted the Constitution this way:

I particularly object to the NEW position which the avowed principle of this Nebraska law gives to slavery in the body politic.

* * * I object to it because the fathers of the republic eschewed, and rejected it. The argument of "Necessity" was the only argument they ever admitted in favor of slavery; and so far, and so far only as it carried them, did they ever go. They found the institution existing among us, which they could not help; and they cast blame upon the British King for having permitted its introduction. BEFORE the constitution, they prohibited its introduction into the north-western Territory—the only country we owned, then free from it. AT the framing and adoption of the constitution, they forebore to so much as mention the word "slave" or "slavery" in the whole instrument. In the provision for the recovery of fugitives, the slave is spoken of as a "PERSON HELD TO SERVICE OR LABOR." In that prohibiting the abolition of the African slave trade for twenty years, that trade is spoken of as "The migra-



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

This commemorative broadside published by F. G. Renesch of Chicago in 1919 invoked the memory of the Emancipation Proclamation and linked it to the achievements of the American Negro since Lincoln's time. Of particular interest, of course, is the reference to black soldiers in World War I. The two faces flanking Lincoln are those of officers of the 370th United States Infantry Regiment (formerly the Eighth Illinois), the only regiment in the United States Army with black officers from the highest to lowest ranks called into service in World War I. Lieutenant Colonel Duncan was the highest ranking Negro in the American Expeditionary Forces. Frederick Douglass was a contemporary of Lincoln's and a black abolitionist. Paul Dunbar (1872-1906) was a black poet and novelist who won wide critical acclaim before World War I. His father, an escaped slave, enlisted in the 55th Massachusetts Infantry, a black regiment that served in the Civil War. Appropriately for the spirit of Lincoln's thought, he is pictured holding a document with words from the Declaration of Independence written on it.

tion or importation of such persons as any of the States NOW EXISTING, shall think proper to admit," &c. These are the only provisions alluding to slavery. Thus, the thing is hid away, in the constitution, just as an afflicted man hides away a wen or a cancer, which he dares not cut out at once, lest he bleed to death; with the promise, nevertheless, that the cutting may begin at the end of a given time. [Roy Basler, ed., *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1953), II, 274.]

Reading Livermore's pamphlet is almost like reading the notes for a Lincoln speech.

Though the argument was scholarly and the circumstances of its original presentation far removed from the seat of power in Washington, Livermore's *Historical Research* was not an historical apology for past governmental measures—however much it may sound like one. It was, on the contrary, a carefully structured argument for change, some would have said for revolutionary change. When Livermore first read his paper before the Massachusetts Historical Society, it was by no means clear that the Lincoln administration would take any measures at all to affect the institution of slavery.

It was even less clear at the time whether free blacks would be allowed to serve in the armed services of the United States. As recently as August 4, 1862, Lincoln had told a delegation from Indiana offering two regiments of black soldiers for the Northern armies that he was not ready to enlist blacks, because such action "would turn

50,000 bayonets from the loyal Border States against us that were for us." By January 1, 1863, though, Lincoln was ready; he tacked on to the official Emancipation Proclamation issued that day this declaration: "And I further declare and make known that such persons of suitable condition will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, stations and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in paid service." In between, Lincoln had apparently read Livermore's pamphlet.

As Benjamin Quarles describes it in *Lincoln and the Negro* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), Charles Sumner sent Livermore's pamphlet to Lincoln in November. Sumner wrote another correspondent that the pamphlet had interested Lincoln. On December 24, 1862, Lincoln apparently told Sumner that he had mislaid Livermore's pamphlet, and Sumner gave him his own copy on Christmas Day. At the time, Lincoln was working with Sumner on the wording of the official proclamation. Moreover, Brown University owns a copy of Livermore's *Historical Research*, inscribed by the author to the President.

The second part of Livermore's pamphlet dealt with the subject of "Negroes as Soldiers." The approach to this subject was the same as that taken in the first part of the pamphlet, but the territory was not nearly so familiar. In fact, Livermore was probably doing pioneer research in this field:

A question of much importance is presented to our

National Government at this time respecting the employment of negroes as soldiers. Those on whom devolves the responsibility of suppressing this monstrous Rebellion, must ultimately, and at no distant day, decide the matter. In their decision, they will undoubtedly be influenced by a regard to the usage and experience, in this respect, of those who directed our military affairs in the war of Independence, as well as by a consideration of the probable effect of their action on our loyal soldiers, and on the armed traitors who are arrayed against them.

It is not strange that the President, on whom, more than on all others, rests the responsibility of taking the final step in this direction, should pause a while to consider the subject in all its bearings, and to allow public opinion to shape itself more distinctly, that his decision, when made, shall have from the Nation a cordial and general support.

Thus did Livermore rather gingerly approach the problem, duly noting Lincoln's stated objections, but addressing himself to another argument in a form that he perhaps knew Lincoln, who professed to "love the sentiments of those old-time men," would find compelling.

As in the first part, Livermore had to sidestep some official policies and legal enactments, and he even found "an historic parallel" in this: "It may be well to observe, that what has caused so much complaint in the management of the present civil war—the apparently vacillating action and unsettled policy of the administration and the army with regard to the use of negroes as soldiers—is not without a precedent . . . in the annals of the Revolutionary War." Negroes were officially barred from the Continental army by this resolution early in the conflict:

The officers are to be careful not to enlist any person suspected of being unfriendly to the liberties of America, or any abandoned vagabond, to whom all causes and countries are equal and alike indifferent. The rights of mankind and the freedom of America will have numbers sufficient to support them, without resorting to such wretched assistance. Let those who wish to put shackles upon freemen fill their ranks with such miscreants, and place their confidence in them. Neither negroes, boys unable to bear arms, nor old men unfit to endure the fatigues of the campaign, are to be enlisted.

George Washington came to the black soldiers'—and indirectly to Livermore's—rescue by writing to the President of Congress on December 31, 1775:

It has been represented to me, that the free negroes who have served in this army are very much dissatisfied at being discarded. As it is to be apprehended that they may seek employ in the Ministerial Army, I have presumed to depart from the resolution respecting them, and have given license for their being enlisted. If this is disapproved of by Congress, I will put a stop to it.

A meeting of the general officers of the Continental army also resolved to exclude blacks from enlistment, but in regard to free Negroes this was ignored, apparently. Congress decided in Washington's favor on January 16, 1776: "That the free negroes, who have served faithfully in the army at Cambridge, may be re-enlisted therein, but no others."

More important, various colonies pursued different policies in regard to the use of blacks as soldiers. Some rewarded slaves who enlisted with freedom. In Rhode Island, for example, the General Assembly in February, 1778,

Voted and Resolved, That every able-bodied negro, mulatto, or Indian man slave, in this State, may enlist into either of the said two battalions to serve during the continuance of the present war with Great Britain: that every slave so enlisting shall be entitled to and receive all the bounties, wages, and encouragements allowed by the Continental Congress to any soldier enlisting into their service.

It is further Voted and Resolved, That every slave so enlisting shall, upon his passing muster before Col. Christopher Greene, be immediately discharged from the service of his master or mistress, and be absolutely FREE, as though he had never been incumbered with

any kind of servitude or slavery. And in case such slave shall, by sickness or otherwise, be rendered unable to maintain himself, he shall not be chargeable to his master or mistress, but shall be supported at the expense of the State.

Livermore also documented exciting instances of black patriots in the cause of American independence, from the death of Crispus Attucks at the Boston Massacre to the defense of Colonel Greene by black soldiers at Points Bridge, New York in May of 1781.

Everything, of course, was meant as a lesson for the present. "Two or three incidents in the earliest conflicts with the British troops," wrote Livermore, "will show how little prejudice there was against negroes at the commencement of the war, and how ready the citizens generally then were, not only to secure their services as fellow-soldiers, but to honor them for their patriotism and valor." He quoted the historian George Bancroft's assessment of the place of the blacks in the Revolutionary experience:

Nor should history forget to record, that as in the army at Cambridge, so also in this gallant band [at Bunker Hill], the free negroes of the Colony had their representatives. For the right of the free negroes to bear arms in the public defense was, at that day, as little disputed in New England as their other rights. They took their place, not in a separate corps, but in their ranks with the white man; and their names may be read on the pension-rolls of the country, side by side with those of other soldiers of the Revolution.

He also included some digs at the South:

Although slavery existed throughout the country, it is a significant fact, that the principal opposition to negro soldiers came from the States where there was the least hearty and efficient support of the principles of Republican Government, and the least ability or disposition to furnish an equal or fair quota of white soldiers.

South Carolina and Georgia contained so many Tories, at one time, that it was supposed the British officers, who elsewhere would, by proclamation, free all negroes joining the Royal Army, might hesitate to meddle with them in these Colonies, lest "the king's friends" should suffer thereby.

Livermore's historical brief perhaps fell a bit short of its mark. In the Civil War Negroes served in black units and most often with white commissioned officers. Black soldiers at first received ten dollars a month, three dollars of which could be deducted for clothing; the white soldier received thirteen dollars a month plus clothing. Eventually, however, Congress equalized the pay of black and white soldiers.

Probably about 180,000 Negroes served as soldiers (officially called "United States Colored Troops") in the Civil War. They were used for scouting in cases where they knew the Southern terrain well and for spying where they could pass as slaves. At first they tended to be assigned to a great deal of garrison duty. Nonetheless, black soldiers saw major action as early as May 27, 1863, at Port Hudson, Louisiana. They carried out a famous assault at Fort Wagner in South Carolina on July 18, 1863, and fought at Petersburg. In all, black soldiers participated in 250 actions in the Civil War. More than 35,000 Negroes died of disease or hostile action during the war. Although most black troops served under white officers, about one hundred Negroes became commissioned officers during the Civil War. Abraham Lincoln never regretted his decision to endorse the use of black soldiers in the Union forces, a use which he termed "very important, if not indispensable," to the Union cause. After about one year's trial of the new soldiers, Lincoln could say, "So far as tested, it is difficult to say they are not as good soldiers as any."

It is always treacherous ground to prove that a book influenced a man; it is hard to prove even that someone read a book. Still, we do know at least that the argument was the sort that might have appealed to Lincoln. It was the sort he might have used himself had he had to prepare a long speech justifying the clause in the Emancipation Proclamation endorsing the use of blacks as soldiers in the Union armies.



Lincoln Lore

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"Please tell me what is there of the Maryland matter?"

Abraham Lincoln addressed the above question to Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton on July 7, 1864. Lincoln penned the question at the top of a letter written on June 27, 1864 from one G.F. Kurtz to Maryland Senator Thomas H. Hicks. The Lincoln Library and Museum recently purchased the Lincoln-endorsed letter. Although part of the text appears in Roy P. Basler's *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, the full text of the letter has not heretofore appeared in print. The text of the letter and an explanation of the circumstances surrounding it, follow.

THE LETTER THAT PUZZLED THE PRESIDENT

Bonny Brook June 27 1864

Hon. T. H. Hicks

Dear Governor, Your favor of 19th was duly received, and we are anxious to hear further from you -

In the mean time I will mention to you that Lev. Straughn is doing his very utmost to get up a sentiment against the Commissioners, ~~in order~~ thereby ~~to~~ aiding the infamous designs of those who are endeavoring to gobble up the money that was intended for the negro volunteers - But thus far he meets with poor success - Some of his strongest party friends heretofore, are down on him in this matter - Even J.C. Wright his fast friend, is against him, and says he is ready to go on to Washington if necessary to join in ~~an~~ effort to a protest against the order of Sec. Stanton. Mr Rea says he is ready to lose the 300 \$ due him from the Government for his slave rather than the County Commissioners should give way ~~and~~ in their determination, ~~not to~~ and pay the money of the negroes over to that scoundrel. I have not heard of one respectable man, who ~~does not~~ endorses Straughn - or condemns the Commissioners. I will mention further that he asserted to day in the presence of Mr Rea and others that he has my letter to you in his possession (perhaps he meant a copy of it) and that it is simply a complaint about the threat to ~~make a draft on~~ ~~Dorchester~~ for credit other counties with ~~the~~ our men - without any reference to paying the bounty - This you know is an unjust representation of its purport - for I distinctly mentioned the efforts we are

making to get access to the volunteers so as to pay them off - and that we had written to Col. Fry to know when a pass could be obtained for that purpose -

If the President will not revoke the order of the Secretary of War he will certainly not refuse to enable us to comply with it, by furnishing us with authority to go where the negroes are ~~and~~ to pay them off - This will end the controversy, and secure justice to all parties - If you will present the matter to the President in this aspect it seems to me he will not refuse so reasonable a request - The Commissioners meet on Monday next, and I am anxious to be able to inform them of the result of your effort to secure a favorable decision from the President -

As to the County Commissioners, they do not intend to be either brow-beaten or hoodwinked into a dishonorable sub-

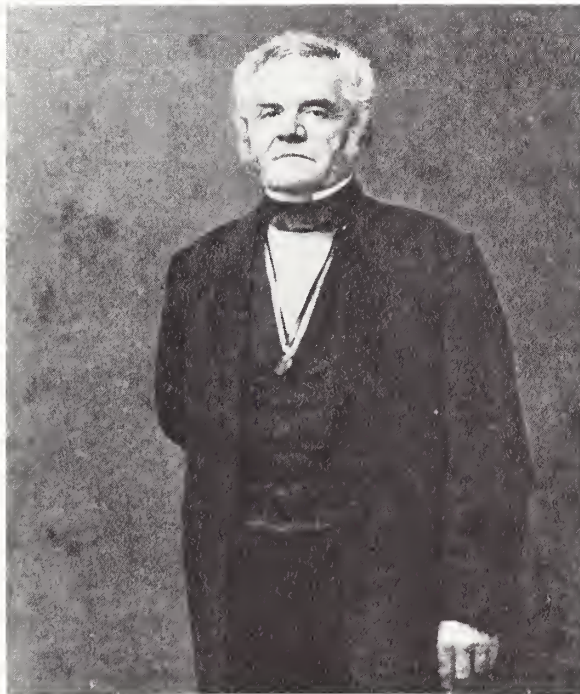
mission. We intend to be governed by the law of Maryland in this matter. There is no other authority or right any where else - It is Maryland money ~~and~~ for Maryland soldiers - Let Mr Stanton see to it that they get the Government bounty - and we will see to it they get the state bounty -

I am yours truly G. F. Kurtz

THOMAS HICKS, NEGRO SOLDIERS, AND MARYLAND IN THE CIVIL WAR

President Lincoln announced his decision to recruit black soldiers for the Union army in the final version of the Emancipation Proclamation on New Year's Day, 1863. Thus the New Year ushered in a period of conflict and consternation in the already confused and bitterly divided politics of Maryland, for in Maryland slavery was still a legal institution and armed black men in uniform were a matter of dread for most white men.

By July, 1863, Colonel William Birney, the son of abolitionist James G. Birney, was recruiting a black regiment in the state. As Charles L. Wagandt shows in *The Mighty Revolution: Negro Emancipation in Maryland, 1862-1864* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1964), Birney saw his chance "of striking a heavy blow at the 'institution' in this state." Apparently, he recruited blacks who were still the property of Maryland citizens as well as free black men. Complaints reached the Maryland governor, and he tried to reach Lincoln.



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

The durable-looking man above is Thomas Holliday Hicks (1798-1865). Born in Maryland, Hicks was a man of little education and much ambition for politics. He served as a constable at age twenty-one and was elected sheriff five years later. Hicks began as a Democrat, became a Whig, and ran for the Maryland governorship on the American (Know-Nothing) ticket. Despite his differences with Lincoln and Lincoln's Secretary of War, Hicks apparently admired the President. In 1863, an ankle injury led to the amputation of his foot. He wrote Lincoln, asking him to shake his son's hand and apologizing for not being able to walk up the stairs himself to see the President. The picture above is from a carte-de-visite photograph of Hicks in the Foundation's collection.

Augustus C. Bradford was the Governor of Maryland. Hicks had been governor when the war broke out but was United States Senator by the time Kurtz wrote him; Kurtz must have referred to him as "Governor" only as an honorary title like "Judge" for a one-time judge (though Basler's footnote in *The Collected Works* does not note this). Bradford apparently had a conference with Stanton and Lincoln, but the practice of recruiting slaves continued. He could gain no satisfaction until the Maryland Senators, Hicks and Reverdy Johnson, added their voices to the complaints; they arranged another meeting with Lincoln.

On October 1, 1863, Lincoln temporarily suspended Negro enlistments in Maryland, pending his meeting with Governor Bradford on October 3. The upshot of the conference can be surmised from Lincoln's memorandum on recruiting Negroes. As Wagandt points out, this document was actually written about events in Maryland in 1863 rather than in 1862, the date given the fragment in *Basler's Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (Volume V, page 338):

To recruiting free negroes, no objection.

To recruiting slaves of disloyal owners, no objection.

To recruiting slaves of loyal owners, *with their consent*, no objection.

To recruiting slaves of loyal owners *without consent*, objection, *unless the necessity is urgent*.

To conducting offensively, while recruiting, and to carrying away slaves not suitable for recruits, objection.

Recruiting resumed, after the conference, under General Orders No. 329. This order followed the outlines of Lincoln's memorandum, the most sensitive provision being that slaves would be enlisted without their master's consent if a county's draft quota were not filled within a thirty-day period. Masters whose slaves were so taken, as well as masters who consented to have their slaves enlist, were to be compensated in amounts up to \$300, for slaves who enlisted became free men thereafter. The master had to file a deed of manumission to receive his money.

Masters' claims were adjudicated by a three-man commission established in Baltimore on October 26, 1863. The commissioners may have been Lincoln appointees. If so, the President probably chose men nominated by Henry Winter Davis, the leader of the "radical" wing of Maryland's Union party (technically, Maryland had no Republican party because the very name smacked too much of abolitionism for this conservative border slave-state). At any rate, the three appointees came from the "radical" wing of Maryland's anti-Democratic party. One appointee, Judge Hugh L. Bond, was famous for having urged the enlistment of slaves long before events in October of 1863 clearly established the legality of such enlistments. He had already tangled with Governor Bradford publicly over this question. Levin E. Straughn, another appointee of the claims commission, was a friend of Henry Winter Davis and the man referred to in Kurtz's letter to Hicks. Davis had been urging, just a month before, that George M. Russum, United States assessor for the First District of Maryland, be replaced by Straughn. Presumably, Winter Davis got Straughn the next available federal job. The third commissioner was Thomas Timmons, a politician who curried favor with Maryland's poor whites rather than her slave owners by urging Negro enlistments so that poor whites could escape the draft. The board was thus fully staffed with men hostile to the very group that would be bringing claims before the board. Lincoln or Winter Davis stacked the deck against Maryland's slaveowners.

Just five days before the claims commission was appointed, according to a report in the Washington *National Intelligencer*, Lincoln had told a group of Maryland slaveowners protesting the presence of black soldiers who were recruiting black enlistees,

first, that he did not know by what authority the force in question had been sent there, and accordingly he directed Mr. Watson (Acting Secretary of War in the absence of Mr. Stanton on a visit to the army) to communicate with Gen. Schenck upon that point. He then added, in substance, that he thought that negroes might be recruited in Maryland by consent of masters, as they had been in the Army of the Cumberland, but he did not wish to effect the object in any rude or ungentlemanly manner. The President said he had promised Governor Bradford, Mr. Reverdy Johnson, and others that the enlistment of negroes should not take place under ninety days. He thought he would order the withdrawal of the negro troops now upon the Patuxent.

The nature of the appointees to the claims commission certainly negated the tone of mollification of slaveowners in Lincoln's statement.

On February 6, 1864, the Maryland state legislature added a \$100 bounty to the \$300 maximum to be paid slaveowners who filed deeds of manumission for Negro enlistees. It also



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

Edwin McMasters Stanton (1814-1869) wielded considerable power as Lincoln's Secretary of War, and the conflicts generated by the War Department's administration of the recruitment program for black soldiers are proof. Senator Hicks and many historians since saw Stanton as a political radical. Yet he was not very politically-minded, having held no major public office before 1860, and he was not very radical early in his career. He was apparently a Democrat, he did not protest the Dred Scott decision that so enraged Abraham Lincoln, and he served briefly in James Buchanan's cabinet.

provided for paying \$50 to the slave when he enlisted and \$50 when he was mustered out of the service. Apparently, there was some foot-dragging on the part of state authorities who were supposed to pay the bounties to the slaves. War Department authorities felt compelled to refuse to give lists of descriptions of Negro enlistees or to accept slave owners' claims for slaves enlisted unless the slave received the state bounty of \$50.

Keeping this background in mind, one can make some sense of "the Maryland matter" that puzzled President Lincoln. The "Commissioners" against whom Straughn was reputedly getting up a sentiment were doubtless the county commissioners rather than the other two claims commissioners, who were apparently of Straughn's own factional persuasion in political matters. As Jean H. Baker has argued in her recent book, *The Politics of Continuity: Maryland Political Parties from 1858 to 1870* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1973), the Civil War witnessed a steady increase in the powers of the already powerful Maryland county-government officials. Before February 6, 1864, when Maryland instituted the state bounty system for enlistments, the state legislature had empowered the county commissioners to pay bounties to Maryland soldiers. Maryland citizens paid seven times higher taxes to the county than the state, and it was the county that wielded the largest resources. The county level was also the level at which the conservative Democratic party was entrenched in Maryland, and, according to Mrs. Baker, "For some Marylanders the most important function of county commissioners was to prevent slaves from joining the Union army." Apparently, the county commissioners still administered the state bounty system when it was instituted in 1864.

Kurtz's letter was a defense of Maryland's county commissioners. Straughn had apparently accused them of reluctance to pay Negro enlistees the state bounty — a charge substantiated by the War Department's resort to withholding descriptions of enlistees and refusing to pay slaveholders' claims until enlistees had the state bounty in hand. Kurtz replied that county commissioners needed War Department authority to have access to the soldiers who otherwise had to obtain a pass

to come to their home county to receive payment. Kurtz, on the other hand, accused Straughn of wanting "to gobble up the money that was intended for the negro volunteers." Straughn probably wanted to dispense the state bounty as well as the Federal compensation. This way, he could see the \$50 paid to the soldier by his own hand before deciding whether to grant a slaveholder's claim for Federal compensation for an enlistee.

It should be pointed out, in all fairness to Kurtz, that the claims commission was notoriously slow about paying claims; Winter Davis's "radical" political allies obviously were none too anxious to please their conservative slave-owning political enemies. Their foot-dragging was so obvious, in fact, that by October, 1864, a Maryland congressman asked the Board for Colored Troops of the Adjutant General's Office for information on claims paid. The reply follows:

A board or commission charged to award a just compensation to loyal owners in the State of Maryland whose slaves enlisted in the military service of the United States has been in session at Baltimore, Md., since December, 1863. The whole number of claims presented to October 4, 1864, is 2,015, five of these being for men drafted.

Up to Oct. 1, 1864, 244 of these claims had been passed upon by the commission; of these nine were rejected, and upon the remainder awards were made proportionate in each case to the term of service which the recruit had prior to enlistment owed to the claimant.

Thus Straughn's commission had paid just twelve per cent of the claims laid before it in eleven months' time. There is little reason to wonder that Maryland's slaveowners were leary of Straughn's gaining control of the state bounties.

Even so, Maryland was better off than other border slave states. As late as January 25, 1865, Secretary of War Stanton had to say,

In reply to the resolution of the Senate of this date, making inquiry respecting the appointment of "a commission in each of the slave States represented in Congress, charged to award to each loyal person to whom a colored volunteer may owe service a just compensation," I have the honor to state that commissioners have been appointed in the States of Maryland and Delaware, and that in the other slave States, by the President's direction, no appointments have yet been made.

Lincoln had bent over backwards to please Maryland. Even Stanton's War Department had done a lot to mollify this slave state. On May 9, 1864, Governor Bradford had written Provost-Marshal-General James B. Fry to request a postponement of the draft in Maryland on the grounds that the state had not been credited properly for the number of colored troops mustered from the state. He complained of the drain on the labor supply in the rural counties occasioned by the loss of so many black men. Even so, he said, he would in his computation make "all due allowance for those who have been actually lost to the State and their owners but not actually mustered, nor perhaps, technically speaking, a proper credit to our quota." Abolitionist recruiters took Negroes who were obviously unfit for service and then released them when they failed their physicals. Bradford was saying he would not count these as credits, even though they hurt Maryland's labor supply. In a denial which was actually an assertion of the point, he claimed that he would "forbear to dwell at all upon other circumstances in the history of the condition of this State, growing out of the number of her disloyal citizens who have gone South that would justly entitle the loyal ones at home to liberal considerations."

On May 10, Fry replied that due credit had been given Maryland for her black volunteers, including credit for 2,252 colored men recently given "without waiting, as is customary, for more certain and formal rolls and returns." Fry went on to state that Maryland had in fact been given "liberal considerations."

First. The quotas assigned to you since March 3, 1863, have all been based upon an enrollment of the white persons found to be still in the State after the disloyal persons had gone South. The quotas being in proportion to the number of men left, the fact that some men had gone South previous to the enrollment worked no hardship.

Second. After having assigned quotas in proportion to the enrollment of white men as above, the slaves were enrolled and are used for filling the quotas of volunteers and draft, but have not been counted to increase the quota. That is surely not dealing "strictly" with you.

Third. During the years 1861 and 1862 quotas were assigned to your State, as to other States, on the basis of population. Those quotas were not raised, and on a settlement of your accounts for those years you were found to be deficient 9,892 men. Instead of being added to the number now required of you, as has been the case in other States, this large deficit has been entirely omitted from your

account. I think, therefore, that Maryland has received "liberal considerations," and that Your Excellency's claim for "simple justice" has been more than satisfied.

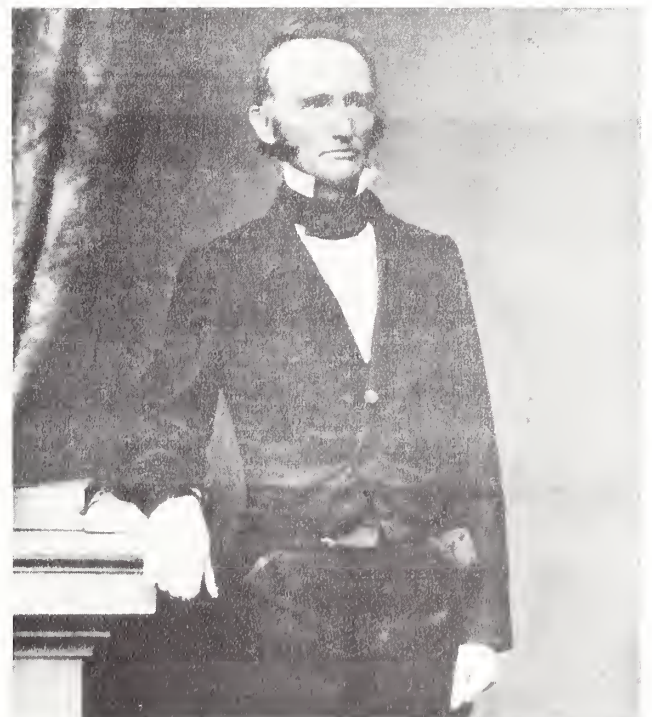
Fry refused to postpone the draft. He also refused to comment on Bradford's insinuation that the War Department had served the political cause of abolishing slavery under the mere cloak of military purpose by carrying off slaves who were physically unfit for military service. He did have an oblique counter to that argument, however, pointing out that Maryland got to credit slave volunteers towards her draft quota which was based on white population alone and not on total population.

The outcome of Kurtz's letter to Senator Hicks is not entirely clear. Lincoln endorsed the letter (written on June 27) on July 7. Nearly a month later, on August 6, 1864, Lincoln telegraphed Colonel Samuel M. Bowman, who had replaced Colonel Birney as the United States officer in charge of recruiting colored troops in Maryland, urging him, to "come and see me." Bowman replied:

Will call with Mr. L. E. Straughn on Monday. Have had a very satisfactory interview with Senator Hicks who says he just begins to understand the subject. Good and not evil is likely to result from the present little agitation.

What occurred at the Lincoln-Bowman-Straughn conference is unknown, but the tone of Bowman's telegram seems to indicate that he had brought Hicks around to his way of thinking. This probably took some doing. Although Bowman replaced the abolitionist's son as chief recruiting officer for Maryland's black men, the change does not seem to have been made in order to replace a radical with a conservative. Birney left Maryland for South Carolina, where he was to command two Negro regiments. For a man of abolitionist leanings this hardly constituted banishment to Siberia. Likewise, as late as August 19, 1864, Senator Hicks wrote Abraham Lincoln, complaining that Henry Winter "Davis & his retinue are doing us [political] damage, but not equal to Hon. E.M. Stanton and Colonel Bowman." Clearly Hicks and Bowman remained factional enemies, but Bowman may have brought Hicks to Straughn's support anyway.

Thomas Holliday Hicks was nothing if not flexible. He had



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

Montgomery Blair (1813-1883) was a border-state politician. Born in Kentucky to a family that became prominent in Democratic political circles, he lived later in Missouri and Maryland. Famous today for his enthusiasm for Negro colonization, Blair was a veteran of anti-slavery politics long before Henry Winter Davis evidenced much concern on the issue. Blair served as counsel for Dred Scott and helped John Brown get counsel too. By 1864, however, he led Maryland's conservative Unionists, and Winter Davis led the "radicals."

been a Democrat, a Whig, and a Know Nothing (it was on the last ticket that he ran for governor and won, to become the Governor of Maryland when the Civil War broke out). Hicks was the son of a slaveholder and a slaveholder himself, but he did much to keep Maryland in the Union. Nevertheless, he was a lukewarm nationalist at most and identified sentimentally with the border slave states. Mrs. Baker quotes two interesting Hicks remarks. The first was in a letter to a Democratic friend in 1860:

I shall be the last one to object to a withdrawal of our state from a Confederacy that denies to us the enjoyment of our undoubted rights; but believing that neither her honor nor interests suffer by a proper and just delay, I cannot assist in placing her in a position from which we may hereafter wish to recede. When she moves in the matter, I wish to be side by side with Virginia — our nearest neighbor — Kentucky and Tennessee.

The second, from an "Address to the People of Maryland" (January 3, 1861) urged a

full interchange of views with the Governors of Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri with a view to concerted action upon our part . . . I believe firmly that the salvation of the Union depends upon the Border slave states. Without their aid, the Cotton States could never command the influence and credit and men essential to their existence as a nation. Without them, the Northern half of the republic would be shorn of its power and influence.

As early as March 18, 1862, this Maryland slaveholder was urging emancipation on Abraham Lincoln, and he supported the move to emancipate Maryland's slaves by means of a constitutional amendment in 1864. Yet Hicks was no mere self-aggrandizing trimmer. He supported emancipation at some considerable personal loss, as a rather self-pitying letter he wrote President Lincoln in 1864 shows: "I have given up fifteen to twenty thousand dollars worth of slaves, without a murmur and have labored assiduously to bring about Emancipation in Maryland, and yet I suppose I am looked upon by some as a Copperhead . . ."

According to Reinhard H. Luthin's article, "A Discordant Chapter in Lincoln's Administration: The Davis-Blair Controversy" (*Maryland Historical Magazine*, XXXIX [March, 1944]), Henry Winter Davis ironically became a regular White House visitor who had President Lincoln's ear through the good offices of Governor Hicks. By the time Hicks was a Senator, however, he and Winter Davis were factional enemies. Davis led Maryland's Unconditional Unionist party; Hicks was a member of Postmaster General Montgomery Blair's Conditional Unionist faction. In truth, the factions were inappropriately named, for the Conditional Unionists desired a war for the Union without immediate emancipation as a condition of peace. The so-called Unconditional Union men in fact wanted immediate emancipation to be one result of saving the Union.

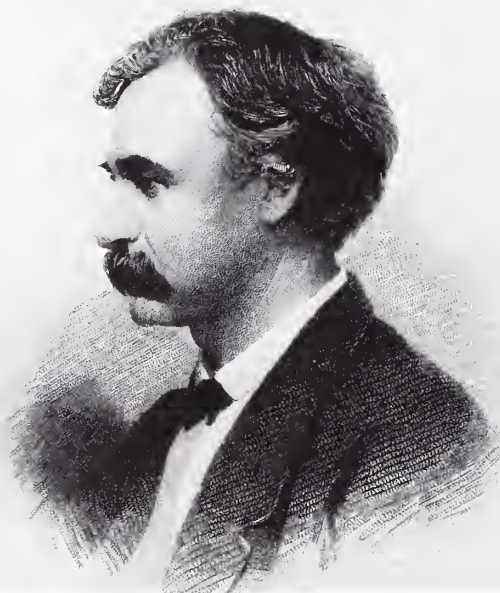
Even after the meeting in Washington in early August, which was meant to resolve the Kurtz-Straughn-Bowman-Hicks feud, Hicks was still complaining to Lincoln about Stanton, Winter Davis, and Bowman. He seems to have had a personal hatred of Stanton. In June of 1864, Stanton had insulted Hicks when he came to the Secretary of War with a request to release a prisoner. Stanton apparently lectured Hicks for trying to gain the release of rebels, and Hicks wrote Lincoln demanding an apology from Stanton and threatening to resign. In late August, Hicks also sent Lincoln a letter from a W. Thomson, who said that Henry Winter Davis was giving jobs to Lincoln's enemies in the Baltimore customs house. Yet these threats of resignation and the reports on the Baltimore customs house were probably just the beginnings of what became a concerted campaign by Hicks's friends in the autumn of 1864 to get him the lucrative job of collector for the port of Baltimore so that he could resign his job as Senator and halt the decline in his health.

In late August he still hated Stanton and Bowman more than the factional enemies in Maryland who blocked him from getting the customs house job. His letter to Lincoln complaining that Stanton and Bowman did the party more damage than Davis and the Baltimore customs house crowd, suggested that the abuses in Negro recruiting would lead to defeat of the emancipation provision in the new Maryland constitution, to loss of the November election in Maryland, and to turning Maryland and Pennsylvania into battlefields of outright civil war. This was a dire prediction indeed and came from a Maryland moderate who supported Lincoln's war efforts and emancipation in the nation and Maryland. Whatever resolution the August 6 Lincoln-Bowman-Straughn conference brought had been but a temporary lull in Maryland's factional warfare.

In fact, the problem of Negro enlistments never reached the proportions Thomas Hicks predicted and not, apparently,

because Lincoln halted Stanton's and Bowman's activities in Maryland nor Straughn's foot-dragging on the claims commission. John W. Blassingame's lucid article on "The Recruitment of Negro Troops in Maryland" (*Maryland Historical Magazine*, LVIII [1963], 20-29) was an immense help in sorting out the complex legal situation in Maryland. He points out that Negro recruiting succeeded because poor whites could use blacks as draft substitutes and because slaveowners could get \$300 or \$400 for property that many sensed would soon be lost anyway.

"This Maryland matter" and others like it, however, do point to a larger conclusion about Abraham Lincoln's policies. A son of the border himself, Lincoln had really left Hicks's world and never looked back. Lincoln, in fact, did more for Maryland (by way of establishing a claims commission for loyal slaveowners) than he did for Tennessee, Missouri, or his native Kentucky. He wanted no ungentlemanly behavior in recruiting black soldiers, but he did want them recruited. Lincoln stood for policies that made even pro-Lincoln Unionists complain. Men who do not believe in policies do not usually implement them effectively. When it came to carrying out his policy, Lincoln relied on Stanton, Bowman, and friends of Henry Winter Davis like Levin E. Straughn. Hicks hated Stanton, the man who instrumented a policy most Marylanders disliked, more than he hated Davis, the man who blocked access to the patronage job Hicks wanted. Policy on race more than factional disputes about jobs separated Hicks from Lincoln's brand of Republicanism.



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

Henry Winter Davis (1817-1865) may have got his hatred of the Democracy from his Federalist father, who had been removed by Andrew Jackson's supporters from the presidency of Maryland's St. John's College. Winter Davis's party career was erratic, but he never identified with the Democrats. He began as a Whig, became a Know Nothing, and supported the Constitutional Union party in 1860 rather than the Republican party and Lincoln. His five-year feud with Montgomery Blair began when President Lincoln chose Blair rather than Winter Davis for Postmaster General. Some historians argue that Davis's opposition to Lincoln's plans for reconstruction in 1864 was a matter of political pique stemming from his feud with Lincoln's cabinet member rather than a matter of principle. Such an interpretation jibes with Winter Davis's apparent indifference to the slavery issue in 1860. However, it ignores the obvious political clout Davis had in determining Lincoln's patronage selections in the intervening years. A biography of Henry Winter Davis is badly needed, and apparently one will appear soon. The line-and-stipple engraving above was made by F. Halpin from a photograph and published in *Speeches and Addresses . . . by Henry Winter Davis, of Maryland* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1867).



Lincoln Lore

March, 1977

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Number 1669

The Contents of Lincoln's Pockets at Ford's Theatre

On February 12, 1976, the Library of Congress revealed the contents of the "mystery box" containing the contents of Abraham Lincoln's pockets the night he was assassinated. The dramatic timing of the announcement — on Lincoln's birthday in the nation's bicentennial year — led to its being widely noted in the press. All over the nation people read that Lincoln had carried a pair of gold-rimmed spectacles engraved by their donor Ward Hill Lamon, another pair of folding spectacles in a silver case, an ivory pocket knife, a fancy watch fob, a large white Irish linen handkerchief with his name embroidered on it in red cross-stitch, an initialed sleeve button, and a brown leather wallet. The wallet proved to con-

tain probably the most startling item, a five-dollar Confederate note, and nine old newspaper clippings. The newspaper clippings were dismissed in the news releases with little comment beyond saying that the President could perhaps be forgiven for the minor vanity of carrying old adulatory news items in his pockets.

None of the accounts of the opening which I read — and I read several because I happened to be travelling across the country at the time and saw several different newspapers — bothered to recount even the titles of the articles from Lincoln's wallet. Curiosity was too much to bear, and I wrote the Library of Congress to find out what the articles said. They



DON'T SWAP HORSES.

JOHN BULL. "Why don't you ride the other Horse a bit? He's the best Animal."

BROTHER JONATHAN. "Well, that may be; but the fact is, OLD ABE is just where I can put my finger on him; and as for the other—though they say he's some when out in the scrub yonder—I never know where to find him."

From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

FIGURE 1. John Bright was of a different mind, but most Americans assumed that most Englishmen, like John Bull in this 1864 cartoon from *Harper's Weekly*, supported McClellan rather than Lincoln in the election of 1864.



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

FIGURE 2. Henry Ward Beecher (1813-1887) was probably the most conspicuous clergyman of his day.

were able to produce photographs of seven of the articles; two are in too poor shape to be taken to the photographer, apparently.

I was glad I wrote when I received the photographs. Contrary to what I had been led to believe by the press coverage, only two of the articles were merely pieces of praise for the President. The other five, though they were not critical, dealt essentially with other subjects. Presumably, we may interpret these articles as indications of some of the problems which engaged the President during the last year of his administration. It would be wrong to place too much emphasis upon them just because Lincoln retained them so long (none of the clippings was from a newspaper printed immediately before the assassination). He was a man of notoriously disorderly habits whose office filing system as a lawyer had consisted of a bundle of legal papers tied together with a note written by Lincoln, "If you can't find it anywhere else look in here." Still, he showed enough initial interest to clip the articles or at least to retain them in his wallet once given them by others.

It is interesting to note the sort of praise which the President valued. Two of the clippings contained nothing but praise, it is true, but the praise came from two quarters where Lincoln had not proven popular in the past. An account of Henry Ward Beecher's address at the Academy of Music in Philadelphia told "how strong a hold the President has upon the popular heart throughout the loyal North." Beecher had written a series of editorials in 1862 which were, from his own recollection, "in the nature of a mowing-machine — they cut at every revolution — and I was told one day that the President had received them and read them through with very serious countenance, and that his only criticism was: 'Is thy servant a dog?' They bore down on him very hard." Things were very different in 1864, and Beecher told his Philadelphia audience that Lincoln's prosecution of the war had been effec-

tive. When an incidental mention of Andrew Jackson seemed to bring forth audience interest, Beecher exploited his opening by saying, "Abraham Lincoln may be a great deal less testy and wilful than Andrew Jackson, but in a long race, I do not know but that he will be equal to him." This was followed by a "storm of applause" which "seemed as if it never would cease." Philadelphia would go for Lincoln in the election of 1864, but Beecher had sensed the campaign strategy which would work in this negrophobic home of General McClellan. The stress would have to be put on Lincoln's Jacksonian qualities as a stern and uncompromising foe of separatism. The election would not be a referendum on the popularity of emancipation and the Republican platform's commitment to the Thirteenth Amendment — if it could be avoided.

A large photograph of John Bright, the British liberal, hung in the anteroom of Lincoln's office in the White House. Doubtless, the President was gratified to read the clipping about "John Bright on the Presidency." In a letter written to Horace Greeley before the election of 1864, Bright observed that "those of my countrymen who have wished well to the rebellion, who have hoped for the break-up of your Union, who have preferred to see a Southern Slave Empire rather than a restored and free Republic, . . . are now in favor of the election of Gen. McClellan." On the other hand, "those who have deplored the calamities which the leaders of secession have brought upon your country, who believe that Slavery weakens your power and tarnishes your good name throughout the world, and who regard the restoration of your Union as a thing to be desired and prayed for by all good men, . . . are heartily longing for the re-election of Mr. Lincoln." Lincoln's election would prove that republican countries could survive "through the most desperate perils."

Lincoln seems to have been taking a keen interest in the state of Confederate morale. Two of the clippings dealt with this subject. Both carried the news that disaffection among the Confederate soldiers was high. "The Disaffection Among the Southern Soldiers" republished a letter from the *Toledo Blade* which had been "picked up in the streets of Brandon, Mississippi, by Captain Dinnis, of the 62nd Ohio Regiment." Dated July 16, 1863, the letter complained of "the vacillating policy and hollow promises" by which the soldiers had been "duped so long." With no provisions prepared along the route of retreat, the army was moving slowly. The Confederates paroled at Vicksburg were deserting. "The negro emancipation policy," the letter continued, "at which we so long hooted, is the most potent lever of our overthrow. It steals upon us unawares, and ere we can do anything the plantations are deserted, families without servants, camps without necessary attendants, women and children in want and misery. In short, the disadvantages to us now arising from the negroes are tenfold greater than have been all the advantages derived from earlier in the war." Certainly, this was welcome vindication of Lincoln's policy of emancipation, which had been justified precisely on the grounds that it would weaken the Southern war effort.

"A Conscript's Epistle to Jeff. Davis" shows the President's interests in rather a different light. This article also purported to reprint a captured Confederate letter, but the letter was much more satirical in tone and surely spoke in part at least to Lincoln's love for rough humor. Addressing the Confederate President as "Jeff., Red Jacket of the Gulf, and Chief of the Six Nations," one Norman Harold of Ashe County, North Carolina, expressed his desire to desert the "adored trinity" of the Confederacy, "cotton, niggers, and chivalry." He denounced Davis in mock-monarchical-reverence as the "Czar of all Chivalry and Khan of Cotton Tartary," as "the illegitimate son of a Kentucky horse-thief," and as the "bastard President of a political abortion." In the end he expressed the "exquisite joy" which the soldiers would express when Davis "shall have reached that eminent meridian whence all progress is perpendicular." Surely Lincoln found in all this exaggerated bombast some gratification that his Confederate counterpart would bear the burden of outrageous vilification that Lincoln himself had on occasion to bear. Here were the same accusations of monarchical pretensions. And here were the same doubts of proper Kentucky paternity. It must have been reassuring to find that this was the token of partisan discontent and not the result of reasoned and careful

research into the biographical backgrounds of Presidents.

Lincoln also carried with him "Sherman's Orders For His March," a straightforward reprinting of the military commander's outline for his campaign. Lincoln must have realized the great importance of these orders, which constituted the beginnings of a new era in military history. General Sherman carefully instructed his army that there would be "no general trains of supplies," but each regiment would have only "one wagon and one ambulance." Each brigade would have behind it "a due proportion of ammunition wagons, provision wagons and ambulances," but the army was obviously going to travel light, for they were to "start habitually at seven a. m., and make about fifteen miles per day." To do this, the general said, the "army will forage liberally on the country during the march. To this end, each brigade commander will organize a good and sufficient foraging party, under the command of one or more discreet officers, who will gather near the route traveled corn or forage of any kind, meat of any kind, vegetables, corn meal, or whatever is needed by the command; aiming at all times to keep in the wagon trains at least ten days provisions for the command and three days forage." Sherman enjoined certain restraints upon his men: "Soldiers must not enter the dwellings of the inhabitants or commit any trespass; during the halt or a camp they may be permitted to gather turnips, potatoes and other vegetables, and drive in stock in front of their camps. To regular foraging parties must be entrusted the gathering of provisions and forage at any distance from the road traveled." Nevertheless, Sherman directly ordered the wholesale destruction of economically useful property in hostile districts:

V. To army corps commanders is entrusted the power to destroy mills, houses, cotton gins, &c., and for them this general principle is laid down: In districts and neighborhoods where the army is unmolested, no destruction of such property should be permitted; but should guerillas or bushwhackers molest our march, or should the inhabitants burn bridges, obstruct roads, or otherwise manifest local hostility, then army corps commanders should order and enforce a devastation more or less relentless, according to the measure of such hostility.

Sherman's orders even embodied a political interpretation of the nature of the conflict when they allowed the cavalry and artillery to "appropriate freely and without limit" the horses, mules, and wagons of the inhabitants — "discriminating, however, between the rich, who are usually hostile, and the poor or industrious, usually neutral or friendly." Again, he urged restraint. "In all foraging," he said, "of whatever kind, the parties engaged will refrain from abusive or threatening language, and may when the officer in command thinks proper, give written certificates of the facts, but no receipts; and they will endeavor to leave with each family a reasonable portion for their maintenance." There was no sentimentality in his provisions for coping with live contraband: "Negroes who are able-bodied and can be of service to the several columns, may be taken along; but each army commander will bear in mind that the question of supplies is a very important one, and that his first duty is to see to those who bear arms." Clearly, President Lincoln understood the nature of Sherman's epoch-making campaign well and did more than fret over whether the general would be cut off and surrounded by his bold move.

Even as late as 1864, President Lincoln remained preoccupied with the problems of the Border States and, in particular, of Missouri. Two of the clippings dealt with Missouri. "The Message of the Governor of Missouri" defended Governor Hamilton R. Gamble from charges of "copperheadism or disloyalty." Not only did his message pledge him "to support the Government with all our energies in its endeavors to suppress the rebellion in other States," but he also accepted a recent Ordinance of Emancipation "as a measure that will, in a brief period, accomplish the great object to be attained in making Missouri A FREE STATE." He also encouraged the emigration of free laborers from Europe. "If Governor GAMBLE were a Kentuckian," the newspaper remarked, "we should think him a very sound Union man. We do not know but he would be charged with being an 'Abolitionist.'" This article contained some praise for the President, because it condemned radicals who charged him with deserting the cause of

freedom for not giving in to "demands of the radicals that seemed intolerant and obtrusive." The article concluded: "The charge is unfounded and absurd. Doubtless he would rejoice as heartily as any radical, at the speedy abolition of slavery in Missouri, but he is not disposed to encourage excesses that might damage the good cause itself."

Some of the reasons for the dispute over emancipation policy in Missouri are readily apparent in another clipping from Lincoln's wallet, "Emancipation in Missouri." This article simply printed the Ordinance of Emancipation passed by the Missouri State Convention. Slavery was to end in Missouri on July 4, 1870. On that day all slaves in the state were to be free, "Provided, however, that all persons emancipated by this ordinance shall remain under the control and be subject to their late owners, or their legal representatives, as servants during the following period, to wit: Those over forty years of age, for and during their lives; those under twelve until they arrive at the age of twenty-three; and those of all other ages until the 4th of July, 1876." "Apprenticeship" was the term which was used to describe the nature of the proposed relationship between Missouri's "freedmen" and their "former" masters. However, we sometimes forget how limited a form of freedom apprenticeships can be because we use the term "apprentice" today to mean little more than "understudy." The Missouri Ordinance of Emancipation drew a good deal harsher picture: "The persons, or their legal representatives, who, up to the moment of emancipation, were owners of slaves hereby freed, shall, during the period for which the services of such freedmen are reserved to them, have the same authority and control over the said freedmen for the purpose of receiving the possessions and services of the same that are now held by the masters in respect of his slaves; provided, however, that after the said 4th of July, 1870, no person so held to service shall be sold to non-residents or removed from the state by authority of his late owner or his legal representative." In fact, then, those forty years old and above forever, children until the age of twenty-three, and everyone for at least six



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

FIGURE 3. John Bright (1811-1889) was a British liberal whose letters to Charles Sumner were read to President Lincoln.

years after 1870, would be serfs who could not earn the product of the sweat of their brows and whose only rights were (1) the right not to be sold to non-Missourians and (2) the right not to be removed from Missouri by their masters.

The Ordinance of Emancipation was basically Governor Gamble's plan. It was opposed by more radical Missourians who were called "Charcoals" for obvious reasons. Gamble led the opposing "Claybank" faction, so called because they were supposedly the occupants of colorless middle ground on the hot political question of slavery. Though there were some who were more conservative than Gamble — "Snowflakes," who thought slavery could somehow survive the war in Missouri, and Frank Blair, who still longed for the impossible dream of colonization, Gamble's was the conservative faction in Missouri politics at this time. It was little wonder that radical critics found his emancipation plan less than satisfactory, for it offered freedom to no one in less than twelve years from the date of the Ordinance (1864). Charcoals, though they preferred January 1, 1864 as the date of emancipation, were willing to settle for November 1, 1866. In the end, the political situation changed in Missouri, and slavery was abolished in the state in January of 1865.

Although it is true that none of the clippings was critical of President Lincoln and that all could be construed in some way as praise for him or as testimony to the success of his policies, it seems inadequate to dismiss these interesting clippings as the tokens and badges of a harmless Presidential vanity. The contents of these articles can help to illuminate the preoccupations of the mind of one of America's least confiding Presidents.

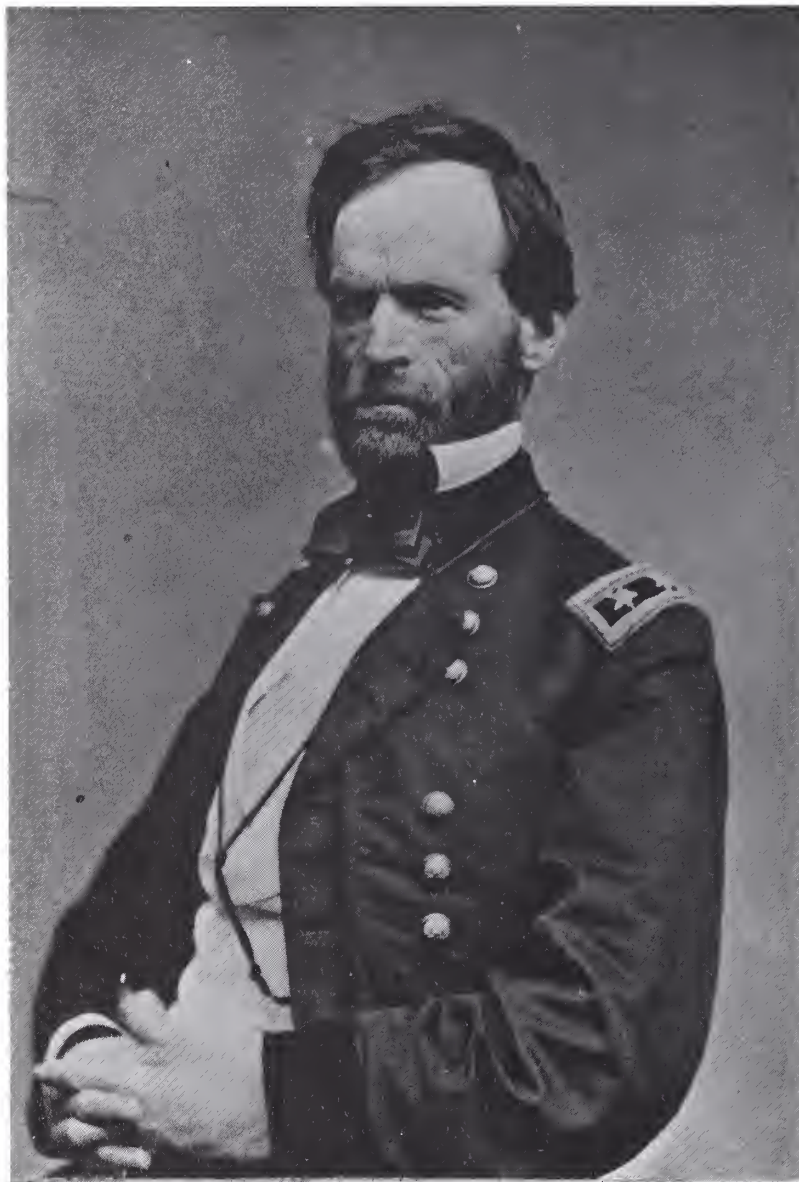
This was a man who especially valued the hard-won praise of his sometime critics. This was a man who realized the value of international opinion and who, despite his provincial background, cared for the opinions of the great world beyond the borders of the United States.

In 1864, as always, Lincoln was a man preoccupied with politics and social questions. These clippings did not contain gems of helpful political philosophy or religious musings. They show the President to have been preoccupied with what historians like James G. Randall, Reinhold Luthin, and David Donald have said he was preoccupied with, the realities of politics

and power — the strength of the Confederacy, the success of his emancipation policy, and the never-ending factional problems of Missouri politics. This was a politician's wallet, and all we can tell of his personality from the nature of the articles is that he liked humor.

It would strain these materials too much to argue with any certainty that they show us the way the President's mind was leaning near the end of his life. Still, we cannot ignore the bearing of these articles on some of the great questions of Lincolniana. When Lincoln discussed gradual emancipation with Confederate representatives at Hampton Roads in February of 1865, did he by any chance have something as leisurely as Missouri's plan in mind? When he allowed himself to think of states of quasi-freedom like apprenticeship as sequels to slavery, was he thinking of anything as restrictive as Missouri's plan of apprenticeship? Was Lincoln's conception of warfare clearly that of Sherman as described with such clarity and force in that General's orders for the march

through Georgia? Was Lincoln not fully cognizant of the extent to which the war-nurtured passions of the North would demand some psychological satisfactions from Jefferson Davis, the "Czar of Chivalry," and the rich Southerners who allegedly led the poor and industrious Southerners into a war they cared nothing about? All of the questions of Reconstruction seem to burn through these pages with an intensity and brightness that makes clear that these questions surely were the major preoccupations of the President in 1864. The atmosphere of the Hampton Roads Peace Conference and of the early period of Reconstruction with their preoccupations with sequels to slavery and the problems of dealing with the former Confederate leaders is already in these worn fragments of newspaper articles which were found in the wallet of a President released at last from turmoil and strife on April 15, 1865.



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

FIGURE 4. General William Tecumseh Sherman (1820-1891) forbade pillaging by his soldiers when he was in command around Memphis in 1862. His decision to march through Georgia late in 1864 in order to attack the South's only untouched base of supply, Georgia, launched him to international fame. By taking the war to the civilian economy rather than simply to the lives of soldiers, he wrenched war out of its eighteenth-century assumptions and pushed it towards the twentieth century.

Editor's Note: I wish to thank Mrs. Mary C. Lethbridge, Information Officer of the Library of Congress, for supplying us with photographs of the clippings in Lincoln's wallet.

J. Duane Squires of New London, New Hampshire, has caught two errors in *Lincoln Lore*. In Number 1664, Senator Hale was from New Hampshire not Maine. In Number 1667, Adams was a "Minister" not an "Ambassador," a title not created until 1893.

Professor says blacks share Civil War legacy with whites

BATON ROUGE (AP) — The role of blacks in the Civil War is misunderstood, and blacks in the South hold a common heritage with whites, a philosophy professor says.

"When you eliminate the black Confederate soldier, you've eliminated the history of the South," said Leonard Haynes, a professor of philosophy at Southern University, a student of the Civil War and a former Methodist minister.

Next month, Haynes, a black man born on a farm in Texas, will address the Military Order of the Stars and Bars, a society of descendants of Confederate officers.

Haynes, 69, says he will talk about blacks who served on the side of the Confederacy — a topic that is barely known, much less understood.

As many as 50,000 blacks fought for the South, Haynes said. They

included "free men of color," blacks who owned slaves themselves and slaves who went to war with their masters.

People misunderstand the origins and reasons for the war and the legacy it left behind, Haynes said.

The war was fought for economic reasons, not slavery, which he contended would have died if the war had not been fought. Slavery had become unproductive economically, he said.

Blacks would not be offended by the Confederate flag and people singing "Dixie" if they understood that they share a common heritage with white Southerners who recall those days.

"It's a part of our history," Haynes said. "We shared in the plantation scheme of things as well as the forces that fought to keep them."

The invitation to address the military order grew from a similar speech Haynes made last month to a regional chapter of the organization.

Haynes said he represents a silent majority of middle-class blacks in professional fields who have grown weary of black leaders who have grabbed the media spotlight.

"It's a part of our history. We shared in the plantation scheme of things as well as the forces that fought to keep them."

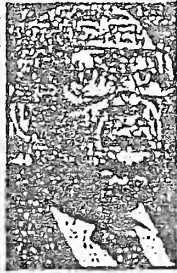
— Leonard Haynes,
Professor

"We've been remiss in allowing third-rate black scholars and third-rate politicians and rap music singers to shape the minds and reality of black youth," he said.

Haynes said he wants to offer an alternative role model for young people.

"There's progress for black kids when they cut the mustard and become committed and intellectual," said Haynes, whose three children work in professional fields.

"History is going to go where we want it to go. And the black intellectual is going to be sought after," he said.



Haynes

Fund-raising renewed for black war memorial

By **Connie Cass**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A decade ago, Congress approved a memorial to the 5,000 black soldiers and sailors — some free, some slaves — who fought for America's independence. But attempts to raise \$6.5 million never took off.

Supporters relaunched the campaign Thursday, accepting a \$400,000 donation and predicting they would collect the rest of the money within eight months — the deadline for reserving the memorial's place on the National Mall.

The non-profit fund-raising group, called the Black Patriots Foundation, hopes to put missteps and internal dissension behind it in one last sprint to the finish.

"We have come too far," said Rep. Nancy Johnson, R-Conn., who sponsored the bill authorizing the monument in 1986. "We owe this one to our children and to ourselves."

The monument, to be built near the Vietnam and Korean war memorials, would honor the black men, women and children who

helped build the colonies, as well as those who fought in the Revolutionary War. An escaped slave, Crispus Attucks, was the first American to die in the Revolution.

A combination of sculpted figures and two curved walls, it would be the nation's second-largest bronze artwork, after the Statue of Liberty.

"The monument is intended to honor those black patriots who fought and served, not for what they received, but for what they sought — freedom and liberty for all Americans," said the sculptor, Ed Dwight.

General Motors Corp., an early supporter of the project, donated \$400,000 on Thursday and pledged to raise \$1.1 million more.

To meet its Oct. 27 deadline, the foundation must raise the needed money and obtain final design approval. The foundation missed two earlier deadlines and was granted extensions by Congress.

"I know we're on the right track, because we see the support we've attempted to get for so many years," Rep. Donald Payne, D-N.J., chairman of the Congression-



Associated Press

Wayne Smith presents a model Thursday of a memorial to black soldiers who fought for America's independence. The \$6.5 million project is to be placed on the Mall in Washington.

al Black Caucus, told the crowd that spilled outside a House meeting room for the kickoff ceremony.

Noticeably absent was the man who dreamed up the memorial and shepherded the idea through Congress.

Maurice Barboza co-founded the foundation with Margaret Johnston, whose husband, James,

was then a vice president of General Motors. He has since retired.

Barboza was the group's president until 1992, when after several disputes he pressed the board members to quit. Instead, they ousted him.

Barboza questions the foundation's ability to complete the memorial.

Handwritten: FWSG 3/1/96



AMERICAN

BY STEPHEN J. OCHS

SPARTACUS

DESPITE OPPOSITION AND HARASSMENT FROM SOUTHERN WHITES,
CAPT. ANDRE CAILLOUX FOUGHT AND DIED LEADING TROOPS
IN A BRUTAL CIVIL WAR BATTLE THAT PROVED
WHAT AFRICAN-AMERICAN SOLDIERS COULD ACCOMPLISH

AMONG THE ENORMOUS CROWD GATHERED on a July day in 1863 stood black soldiers, their families, and friends, who were there, much to the chagrin of many white New Orleanians, to bid a final farewell to one of their own: Capt. André Cailloux, of Company E, 1st Regiment, Louisiana Native Guards. Cailloux had been one of the first black military heroes of the Civil War, an officer in the first black regiment officially mustered into the United States Army. He had fallen on May 27, 1863, while leading a doomed charge of the Native Guards against an impregnable Confederate position defending Port Hudson, Louisiana. His corpse had lain for more than 40 days in the burning sun, identifiable only by a ring on his finger. After a steamer had returned the body to New Orleans, it had lain in state in a closed coffin in the hall of the Friends of the Order, a mutual-aid society to which he had belonged. After the funeral services, a hearse, accompanied by a military cortege, carried

the casket through the crowded streets to St. Louis Cemetery No. 2, where it was interred with full military honors.

The Reverend Claude Paschal Maistre, former pastor of St. Rose of Lima parish, presided. Two months earlier, the archbishop of New Orleans had suspended Maistre for "inciting Negroes." Maistre had been harboring runaways, publicly advocating abolition, and urging blacks to enlist in the Union Army. On the day of Cailloux's funeral he defied the archbishop by conducting the services. But Father Maistre was only the first of many to eulogize Cailloux as a martyr to the cause of freedom. Newspapers throughout the North gave the funeral extensive coverage, and George H. Boker, a popular Civil War poet, memorialized the fallen soldier in an ode titled "The Black Captain." A later historian, Rodolphe Desdunes, would call Cailloux an "American Spartacus" after the Thracian slave who led a revolt against the Romans from 73 to 71 B.C. Cailloux's heroism fired the

imagination of New Orleanians of African descent, for whom he became a powerful, almost mythic figure.

Like most of the 11,000 free blacks and many of the 14,000 slaves living in New Orleans in 1860, Cailloux was an Afro-Creole, a person of mixed African and French or Spanish descent. He was born on August 25, 1825, in rural Plaquemines Parish, downriver from New Orleans. His parents were the slaves of a planter named Joseph Duvernay. His father, also named André, worked as a skilled carpenter and stonemason; his mother, Josephine, a strong-willed, religious woman, made it her duty to raise her children as Roman Catholics.

The Catholic Church occupied an awkward position in the antebellum South. It accepted slavery, though the Church also hoped to ameliorate the conditions of the "peculiar institution" and help slave owners promote the spiritual well-being of their slaves. Some of the clergy and many churchgoers owned slaves, and they

tended to shun abolitionists as Protestant extremists. Nevertheless, the Church played a key role, through its sacraments and rituals, in fostering a sense of community among Louisiana's blacks. Marriages, funerals, and especially baptisms brought with them a promise of spiritual equality, and with those rites came written records of familial ties. At the time of Cailloux's baptism, free blacks and slaves made up a substantial portion of the Catholics in New Orleans.

After Joseph Duvernay died, in 1828, the Cailloux family became the property of his sister, Aimée Lartet, who took them to New Orleans. There young André lived only briefly in the same household as both of his parents. He eventually learned the cigar maker's trade, most likely from his half-brothers Antoine and Molière, who had apprenticed with a free-black tobacconist. For reasons that are unknown, Lartet emancipated André in 1846, when he turned 21. Less than a year later, he married Felicie Louise Coulon, herself a recently freed slave, at St. Mary's Assumption Church, and he legally recognized Jean Louis, a boy born to Felicie around eight years earlier, as his own son.

Cailloux was welcomed into the economic, religious, and social circles of the tightly knit and vibrant society of free people of color in New Orleans, a group of Afro-Creoles with businesses and property. Most of them were literate, and they formed mutual-aid and benefit societies, which, in addition to providing money for burials and emergencies and engaging in works of charity, provided leadership roles that were denied to blacks politically in Louisiana. The societies also purchased freedom for slaves and started schools.

Even so, free blacks faced a worsening economic and political climate in New Orleans in the 1850s. In 1855 the state legislature forbade them to incorporate any new religious, charitable, scientific, or literary societies. Since this included schools, the law brought about a decline in the education of free-black children.



Beginning in 1856, blacks could not get liquor licenses, keep coffeehouses, or assemble. A free black who entered the state illegally could be thrown into a workhouse, or worse. In 1857 the legislature forbade the further freeing of any slaves.

Despite these strictures, Cailloux kept providing a respectable living for his family. He continued to make cigars, selling them at tables in the city squares or in shops, and purchased a modest cottage on Coffee Street (now Baronne), in the Fourth District. He also bought his mother out of slavery. During the same period, he honed his reading and writing skills, and he sent his two sons to the Institut Catholique, a school run by Afro-Creole intellectuals that also served as a community center. In 1860, widely respected for his good character, he was elected secretary of a benevolent society, *Les Amis de l'Ordre* (Friends of the Order). A little more than six months later, the cigar maker would become an officer of a different sort.

Not long after the first shots of the war were fired, at Fort Sumter in South Carolina, in 1861, Louisiana's governor, Thomas D. Moore, made a call to arms

that included free blacks. That April, Cailloux, along with hundreds of other free blacks, organized a regiment called the Defenders of the Native Land, or the Louisiana Native Guards. Some may have enlisted out of a sense of loyalty to their state; most probably did so in response to veiled threats from white New Orleanians. Whatever the reasons, there was always the hope that service would translate into improved living conditions at the war's end. Most of the men of the Native Guard came from the ranks of the mutual-aid and benevolent societies—including Cailloux, who traded in his secretary's post for that of a lieutenant. These black Confederate troops saw no action (Governor Moore had meant the black militia to be only for show), and when the Union Army, under Gen. Benjamin Butler, captured New Orleans, in April 1862, the Native Guards were disbanded. But that summer, Butler, finding himself short of troops and fearing a Confederate attempt to recapture the city, accepted an offer by Afro-Creole leaders to recruit three regiments of free people of color into the Union Army.

The response was overwhelming. Nearly a thousand men signed on as the 1st Regiment of Louisiana Native Guards, and two other regiments quickly followed. The top officers of the 1st Regiment were white, but the company officers under them were free blacks, and as captain of E Company, Cailloux was one of them. His enthusiasm was contagious. A Union colonel later recalled, "It was the magnetic thrill of his patriotic utterances that rallied a company for the services of his country." He undoubtedly also found the \$60-per-month officer's salary appealing, since it would help him provide for his family; records indicate that a year before volunteering, he had had to sell his house and move his family in with his mother-in-law.

Captain Cailloux proved an effective recruiter. Gentlemanly, charismatic, and athletic, the 38-year-old officer cut a dashing figure that debunked the stereo-

type of black inferiority. A New York newspaper correspondent who recalled seeing him at headquarters described him as "fine looking" and "imposing" in his military dress. Ignoring General Butler's directive limiting enlistment to free blacks only, Cailloux and other black officers welcomed runaway slaves as well.

The enlisted men and officers all recognized that military service would enhance their chances for greater equality. The newspaper *L'Union*, the public voice of Afro-Creole activism, declared that "from the day that bayonets were placed in the hands of the blacks . . . the Negro became a citizen of the United States." But Georgia's governor, Joseph Brown, expressed a view common among whites when he warned that proof of African-American military competence would "destroy our whole theory that they are unfit to be free."

Hostility came from many sources. Plantation owners refused to grant their slaves contact with soldiers' wives who were slaves. And the government failed to deliver on Butler's pledge to give the soldiers the same bounties and pay as whites, and rations for their families. Some white officers snubbed their black counterparts, while many white enlisted men refused to salute or obey black officers and showered insults on the enlisted men. The 1st Regiment had difficulty procuring supplies and equipment. Once in the field, the regiment spent most of its time on guard or on fatigue duty—wearing manual labor that left little time for drill and training. To make matters worse, Gen. Nathaniel P. Banks, who replaced Butler in December 1862, mounted a campaign to remove the black officers, focusing his initial efforts on the 2nd and 3d regiments.

All this still might have been more bearable had not many Catholic clergy, the spiritual leaders of the majority of the black soldiers, also turned their backs on them. Some parish priests who had blessed the regimental and company banners of the original Confederate Native

Guards now made clear their intense disapproval of the men who enlisted in the Union Army. Father Maistre, however, despite threats to his personal safety, publicly advocated emancipation, and sheltered and ministered to runaway slaves. He served as the unofficial chaplain for the three Native Guards regiments, and he befriended the families of the black troops when other priests spurned them.

Father Maistre had come to New Orleans in 1857 with a checkered past and a reputation for financial chicanery. He had also brought with him liberal ideas

FROM THE DAY
HE FIRST HELD
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NEGRO BECAME
A CITIZEN OF THE
UNITED STATES."

about blacks. His refusal to treat them as anything but equals angered the pro-Confederate archbishop, and Maistre responded to his superior's admonitions to cease and desist by becoming even more blatant in his support of the Union. When he openly supported the black regiments, some whites whispered that they might lynch the priest, and finally the archbishop suspended him. Still, he refused to leave his parish. His stubbornness would eventually outlast the archbishop, who died in 1870, whereafter Maistre delivered an open apology to the Church and lived a quiet life until his own death, in 1875.

Captain Cailloux and the men of the 1st Regiment appreciated the risks that Maistre took in championing their cause. But just as Maistre felt increasingly isolated by hostile opponents, so too did

Cailloux and the 1st Regiment, as they attempted to demonstrate their worth as Union soldiers.

The black regiments' opportunity to prove themselves finally came when companies of the 1st and 3d Louisiana Native Guards were assigned to General Banks's forces, near Port Hudson. On the morning of May 27, 1863, the regiments, each about 540 men strong, received orders to participate in an assault on Port Hudson, one of the two remaining Confederate strongholds on the Mississippi River (the other was Vicksburg, Mississippi). Their task was to storm a forbidding position of bluffs and rifle pits protected by a swamp and a Rebel-engineered backwater from the river. Cailloux's Company E, chosen to bear the regimental standards, would man the center of the line and spearhead the assault over an area fully exposed to Rebel fire.

As his regiment advanced, Cailloux calmly moved along the line, encouraging his men. At 10:00 A.M. the bugle sounded, and the Native Guards emerged from the woods in good order, advancing toward the bluff about 600 yards away. The 1st Regiment led off, followed closely by the 3d, each in a long line two ranks deep. The Confederates directed withering musket and artillery fire at the advancing troops, who broke ranks and ran for cover among some willow trees. Cailloux and several other officers rallied their men repeatedly. Finally, Cailloux led a charge of shouting men to a backwater about 200 yards from the bluffs. At that point, they got off their first and only volley. The Confederate Army unleashed a firestorm of such intensity that only the cover provided by trees and other obstacles prevented a complete slaughter.

In the midst of the pandemonium, Cailloux sought again to rally his men. His face ashen from the sulfurous smoke, his left arm broken and dangling, he held his sword aloft in his right hand and called for his soldiers to follow him. As he moved across the flooded ditch, a shell struck him in the head and killed



JOURNALISTS, SOLDIERS, AND POLITICIANS HAILED THE BATTLE AND CAILLOUX'S HEROISM.

him. Under a hail of Confederate artillery fire, both regiments sought shelter in the nearby willow forest until nightfall.

The 1st Regiment had suffered at least 100 casualties, including the deaths of 2 officers and 24 enlisted men. All along the Confederate line that day, Union forces had been repulsed with similarly heavy losses; the total Federal casualties exceeded 450 dead and 1,500 wounded. A temporary truce was called, and General Banks ordered the removal and burial of the white soldiers. "The enemy . . . have left the Negroes to melt in the sun," wrote one disgusted Mississippi infantryman in his diary, "after they are killed fighting their battles, having done all they can for the Federals."

The troops of the two Native Guards regiments had performed admirably in the first major battle fought by black soldiers in the Civil War. Journalists, soldiers, and sympathetic politicians hailed the battle in general and Cailloux's heroism in particular. They urged increased recruitment of black soldiers, citing Port Hudson as evidence of their capabilities. The argument for employing black troops gained strength with the subsequent Battle of Milliken's Bend, Louisiana, fol-

lowed by the widely publicized charge of the 54th Massachusetts at Fort Wagner, in Charleston, South Carolina. By the war's end, some 200,000 African-Americans had served in the armed forces of the United States.

In October 1864, more than a year after Cailloux's funeral, the National Negro Convention, presided over by Frederick Douglass, met in Syracuse, New York, and its delegates literally took up Cailloux's standard. The regimental flag of the 1st Regiment, "stained," said the black abolitionist minister Henry Highland Garnet, "with the blood of the brave Captain Cailloux" (actually it was the blood of the standard bearer, Sgt. Anselmo

Plançiançios), was borne into the convention hall and hung over the platform as speaker after speaker extolled the captain's heroism.

The convention eventually created a National Equal Rights League, which launched a campaign for black suffrage. In early 1865 black activists began forming "Cailloux Leagues" throughout New Orleans, to support the objectives of the new Louisiana branch of the Equal Rights League. An Afro-Creole radical and spiritualist medium named Henry Rey announced that he had contacted Cailloux's spirit and claimed that it had promised to remain among his black comrades and to infuse them with "manly courage and an indomitable spirit" in the pursuit of liberty and equality. For a brief period during the false dawn of Reconstruction, those goals must have seemed almost within reach. ♣

This article is adapted from *A BLACK PATRIOT AND A WHITE PRIEST: ANDRE CAILLOUX AND CLAUDE PASCHAL MAISTRE IN CIVIL WAR NEW ORLEANS*, by Stephen J. Ochs, published by Louisiana State University Press. Ochs is the chair of the history department at Georgetown Preparatory School, in North Bethesda, Maryland.



BLACKS IN GRAY: MYTH OR REALITY?

Jason H. Silverman and Susan R. Silverman

LATE IN RALPH ELLISON'S CLASSIC *Invisible Man* the protagonist describes what many consider the fate of black Confederates. "History records the patterns of men's lives . . .," wrote Ellison. "All things, it is said, are duly recorded—all things of importance, that is. But not quite, for actually it is only the known, the seen, [and] the heard . . . that are put down . . . Men out of time, who would soon be gone and forgotten . . . who knows but that they were the saviors, the true leaders, the bearers of something precious? . . . They were outside the groove of history." Whether black Confederates remain "outside the groove of history" is an intensely debated topic that more often than not resembles shrill polemics rather than historical inquiry. In some quarters, the significance of black

Confederates has become something of a mantra. During the recent controversies over the Confederate flag in such states as South Carolina, Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia, the role of black Confederates was waved like the battle flag itself. The historian who wades into this discussion walks a tightrope in a wind storm.

Yet that is precisely what this article seeks to do. By delving into such primary source materials as the *Official Records*, the *Rebellion Record*, and the *Journal of the Confederate Congress*, as well as by examining the secondary literature, we hope to provide a basis for further discussion of whether or not there were black Confederate soldiers. What follows is a sampling of *anecdotal* information on the one hand, and hard *documentary* evi-

dence on the other, which we hope will draw attention to the key issues. For the purpose of this article, we shall define "black Confederates" broadly to include all blacks who directly supported the Confederate war effort in whatever way, and whether willingly or not.

There is little question that African Americans played significant roles for both the Union and Confederate armies. Historian Clarence L. Mohr, in his *On the Threshold of Freedom: Masters and Slaves in Civil War Georgia*, has provided much data to corroborate his contention that blacks formed the backbone of

As illustrated above, many blacks accompanied their masters to war—but that did not make them Confederate soldiers. *Courtesy Tom Farish*

Georgia's military labor force and participated in practically all military activities except actual combat. "An estimated ten thousand slaves and free blacks," writes Mohr, "labored at one time or another on Georgia's military defenses."¹ Joseph Glatthaar, a Civil War historian at the University of Houston and author of *Forged in Battle: The Civil War Alliance of Black Soldiers and White Officers*, quotes the Confederate provisional governor of Kentucky, George W. Johnson, on the contributions of the black Confederates: "the presence of the negro race adds greatly to the military spirit and strength of the Confederate States."² And, as Bell Wiley comments in his legendary *The Life of Johnny Reb*, "The visitor to Southern camps in the first year of the war might expect always to encounter a large number of Negroes. These to be sure, were not soldiers, but their relation to the fighting force was so vital and so intimate as to merit consideration as a part of the army."³ As the editor of *Black Southerners in Gray, Essays on Afro-Americans in Confederate Armies*, Richard Rollins, puts it: "The question then, is not if black Southerners played a role in Southern armies, but what and how they contributed to the war effort."⁴

WHAT WERE THE ROLES OF THE BLACK CONFEDERATES?

It is well documented that blacks contributed to the Confederate war effort from the beginning. One of the more neglected historical sources, *The Rebellion Record*, published during and immediately after the war, includes numerous accounts of these efforts, from the "Confederate Ethiopian Serenaders" who donated concert proceeds for the construction of a Confederate gunboat, to the balls and concerts held by slaves and free blacks to aid soldiers and their families, to the account of "The negroes of Colonel L. A. Jordan, of Georgia, hearing that he had a company on the coast named after him, made with their own hands, and presented through their master to Lieutenant Moffett, of the Jordan Greys, seventy-six pairs of socks, part wool and part cotton."⁵ As the war began, thousands of blacks assumed such support roles for the southern armies as musicians, cooks, body servants, teamsters, and other laborers. For each one of these roles undertaken by a black, a white sol-

dier was freed for military combat roles. Indeed, as Bell Wiley observed in *Southern Negroes*, "Conservation of white man-power for fighting purposes was an appreciable factor. Every 'Sambo' wielding a shovel, released a 'Johnny' for the ranks."⁶

The most renowned of the roles assumed by blacks was that of body servant. As noted historian John Hope Franklin wrote in *From Slavery to Freedom*, "Affluent Confederates took their Negro body servants to war with them. These workers," contends Franklin, "kept the quarters clean, washed clothes, groomed uniforms, polished swords, buckles, and spurs, ran errands, secured rations, cut hair, and groomed the animals. Some even took part in fighting. In November 1861 it was reported that one servant fought manfully and killed four Union soldiers."⁷ Author J.K. Obatala, in his 1979 article "The Unlikely Story of Blacks who were Loyal to Dixie," described the body servant as "a true Johnny Reb. He fought, foraged, captured prisoners, was himself captured and often died. And when white Johnny marched, it was often to black Johnny's music. His loyalty was legendary."⁸ Wiley comments that "During battles the body servant usually remained in the rear out of reach of Federal shells. But a few became so thoroughly imbued with the martial spirit as to grab up muskets during battle and take pot shots at the enemy."⁹

Much anecdotal material exists documenting these body servants. Archivist Ervin L. Jordan, Jr., records the following account of "Nathan" in *Black Confederates and Afro-Yankees in Civil War Virginia*. "Nathan, a body servant belonging to a Lieutenant Williams of the 1st Georgia Regulars, was captured by a Yankee lieutenant who took the slave to a Yankee camp. One morning Nathan was sent by his new owner to a nearby spring for water but instead escaped with two horses to the Confederate lines. As a reward Nathan was allowed to keep both horses; he sold one for \$50.00, kept the other, and returned to his surprised master, who bestowed praises on this faithful servant whom he had given up as a runaway."¹⁰

Perhaps the most well known body servant during the war was Reverend William Mack Lee, who ministered to General Robert E. Lee. In his autobiog-

raphy, Rev. Lee stated, "I was born June 12, 1835, Westmoreland County, Va.; 82 years ago. I was raised at Arlington Heights, in the house of General Robert E. Lee, my master. I was cook for Marse Robert, as I called him during the civil war and his body servant. I was with him at the first battle of Bull Run, second battle of Bull Run, first battle of Manassas, second battle of Manassas and was there at the fire of the last gun for the salute of the surrender on Sunday, April 9, 9 o'clock, A.M., at Appomattox, 1865."

Reverend Lee also describes the occasion when he himself was shot on July 12, 1863, during the retreat from Gettysburg. "Jes' as Mars Robert cum out'n his tent a shell hit 35 yards away. It busted, and hit me, an' I fell over. I must o'yelled, 'cause Marse Robert said he ain't never heard no noise like de wan I hollered. He cum over and tried to cheer me up, an' I hollered lak one o' dem jackass suns. Marse Robert lafed so hard 'cause he said he ain't never seed a nigger holler so loud. An' den he called for de ambulants an' dey tuck me ter de hospital."¹¹

Blacks were also legendary in their roles as cooks and musicians. Obatala describes the resourceful role of "General Boeyguard," one of the more famous cooks, who earned his reputation during Lee's invasion of Pennsylvania. He would leave camp at sunrise and return later in the evening when he "liberally indulged the officers with assorted delights from the tables, orchards and barnyards of the local Pennsylvania Dutch farmers." John Hope Franklin confirms this, asserting that "Most of the cooks in the Confederate army were slaves; and the government recognized their value to the morale and physical fitness of the soldiers by designating four cooks for each company and providing that each one should receive fifteen dollars a month as well as clothing."¹²

There were so many blacks who served in the military bands of the Confederacy, that on April 15, 1862, an act was passed by the Confederate Congress that provided "whenever colored persons are employed as musicians in any regiment or company, they shall be entitled to the same pay now allowed by law to musicians regularly enlisted...." Ervin Jordan further elaborates that "Afro-Virginians camp servants were renowned for their musical and dancing skills and elic-

ited praise from a British journalist for the *Illustrated London Times*. He believed that 'in our camp we are fortunate enough to possess the most famous banjo-player in the Southern States.'¹³ Too, Richard Rollins describes McCreary's 1st South Carolina Infantry, which included a unit of free blacks who had enlisted together as an all-black or predominately black band.¹⁴

Furthermore, there were advertisements in newspapers such as this one included in *The Rebellion Record*: "Wanted Immediately. One hundred laborers to work on batteries. Freemen or slaves. Apply at Chamberlain's Wharf."¹⁸ And military historians Bernard C. Nalty and Morris J. MacGregor in their *Blacks in the Military, Essential Documents* include a letter from President Jefferson Davis to

Norfolk harbor. They were all in the finest spirits, and seemed anxious to 'catch Old Linkum one time.'²⁰

A good deal of anecdotal material illustrates that, at least during the early stages of the war, white Confederates appeared to accept the presence of blacks in the field. For example, Horace Greely, in his *The American Conflict*, recorded, "An observer in Charleston at the outbreak of the war noted the preparation for war, and called particular attention to the thousand Negroes who, so far from inclining to insurrections, were grinning from ear to ear at the prospect of shooting the Yankees."²¹

In November 1861 twenty-eight thousand troops marched in review in New Orleans. Among them was a regiment consisting of 1,400 free men of color. "There were rumors in the North of the use of Negroes in the Confederate army," wrote Wiley in *Southern Negroes*. "A Vermont colonel reported in August, 1861, that 'the Richmond Howitzer Battery' which had withdrawn before his attack near Newport News was manned in part by negroes. Ludlow, the Federal agent for the exchange of prisoners, wrote Ould, the Confederate agent, that the South had used Negro soldiers in Louisiana before the North had a single one in the ranks; that Negroes were captured on the battlefield at Antietam and later received by the Confederate authorities in exchange as prisoners of war. Ould denied this statement."²²

The Rebellion Record records that: "Several companies of the Third and Fourth Regiments of Georgia passed through Augusta for the expected scene of warfare—Virginia. Sixteen well-drilled companies of volunteers and one negro company, from Nashville, Tennessee, offered their services to the Confederate States."²³ Furthermore, "A procession of several hundred stout negro men, members of the 'domestic institution,' marched through the streets of Memphis, Tenn., in military order, under the command of Confederate officers. They were armed and equipped with shovels, axes, blankets, etc. A merrier set never were seen. They were brimful of patriotism, shouting for Jeff. Davis and singing war songs, and each looked as if he only wanted the privilege of shooting an abolitionist."²⁴

Finally, under the heading "The First Attempt to Arm Negroes," the *Record* re-



Slaves prepare a meal for Confederate artillerymen at their picket post near Charleston in 1861.

Another major role assumed by blacks was that of military laborer. The famed historian Charles H. Wesley wrote in 1919 in his seminal article "The Employment of Negroes as Soldiers in the Confederate Army" that "In the first year of the war large numbers were received into the service of the Confederate laboring units."¹⁵ Not only were slaves and free blacks used as military laborers, the Confederate Congress provided for them as well. "Confederate and state governments," wrote John Hope Franklin, "relied on slave and free Negro labor to do much of the hard work involved in prosecuting the war. Slave laborers were secured by contracts with the masters, by hiring them for short periods, and by impressment."¹⁶ J.K. Obatala described the varied tasks performed by military laborers: "the black Confederate did a lot more than just dig ditches. He carried the wounded, tended the sick, drove the teams, moved the guns, raised redoubts, grew the crops and cooked the food."¹⁷

Governor John Letcher of Virginia, in which Davis requests "4,500 Negroes to be employed upon the fortifications.... It is unnecessary to call your excellency's attention to the importance of a prompt and efficient response to this call, in view of the necessity of completing the works for the defense of Richmond."¹⁹

Some blacks eagerly responded to this call, as illustrated by this account from *The Rebellion Record*: "Quite a novel spectacle was witnessed in Petersburg, Va., as we are informed by a gentleman who arrived from that city. One hundred and twenty free negroes, uniformed with red shirts and dark pants, and bearing a flag of the Southern Confederacy, which had been presented to them by the ladies, marched through the city and embarked on the cars for Norfolk. They proceeded upon this excursion of their own free will, in response to the request made by Gen. Gwynn for the services of six hundred negroes from any portion of the State, to work upon the fortifications around

ports: "A correspondent of the Memphis Bulletin shows the first attempt to arm negroes and put them in the field as soldiers was made by the rebels. He copies from the Memphis Appeal and the Memphis Avalanche of May ninth, tenth, and eleventh, 1861, the following notice: ATTENTION, VOLUNTEERS: Resolved by the Committee of Safety, that C. Deloach, D.R. Cook, and William B. Greenlaw be authorized to organize a volunteer company composed of our patriotic free men of color, of the city of Memphis, for the service of our common defence. All who have not enrolled their names will call at the office of W.B. Greenlaw & Co. F. Titus, President."²⁵

Perhaps the most well-known unit of free blacks was formed in Louisiana. In 1861 the governor of Louisiana authorized the use of blacks as soldiers. "A number of Louisiana free blacks did serve as soldiers," wrote Arthur W. Bergeron, Jr. in 1986. "Some fifteen hundred or more New Orleans free blacks made up the 1st Regiment Louisiana Native Guards."²⁶ Historian Loren Schweninger, writing in *Louisiana History* in 1989, provided the following account of the Native Guards: "At the outbreak of the Civil War, most free persons of color in Louisiana supported the Confederacy. In 1861, they organized two splendidly equipped battalions, modeled after the French *Chasseurs d'Afrique*, to fight for the South. In all, more than three thousand Louisiana free Negroes—three out of four adult free men of color in the state—joined colored military or militia units. Some of them, one observer recalled, were as strongly in favor of the rebellion 'as the veriest fire-eater [from] South Carolina.'... Still others supported the Southern cause by donating slave laborers to work on fortifications, purchasing Confederate bonds, or providing food and supplies for the army.... When it became clear that a Union victory was imminent, however, they quickly changed their stance."²⁷

THE GREAT DEBATE

The vast majority of white Southerners (and their Northern counterparts) remained reluctant to arm blacks, and during the early months of the war both sides were troubled by rumors of Negro regiments being raised by their opponents. As early as April 1, 1861, the *New York Times* denied a charge by the

Charleston (S.C.) *Mercury* that the Lincoln administration was planning to arm "the free blacks of the North to aid insurgent negroes in the South," but added, "Sooner or later the truth must become known to the people of the Cotton States, and on their own plantation will arise the Nemesis that is to exact full retribution."



1ST LOUISIANA NATIVE GUARD
1861

The original 1st Louisiana Native Guard was disbanded when Union forces occupied New Orleans in 1862. The following year a Federal regiment of the same name was raised. No one has yet studied how far the membership of the two overlapped.

On May 12 the *Times* in lighter vein discussed Southern newspaper reports of the raising of Negro troops by the South, the *Times* editorial writer wryly commenting on "the delirious devotion to the revolutionary cause of the free darkies ... who loll in luxury on the plantations of Alabama, or linger over their paté de fois gras, or Chateau Lafitte, by the romantic swamps of the Savannah." The *Times* summarized the arguments in favor of the use of black troops by the North, pointing out that Negroes had long served in both the French and British armies. However, the paper admitted that "for the present at least, the revolutionists must have the monopoly of the negro element in their army."²⁸

In *Blacks in the Military Nalty* and MacGregor wrote that "Fear of armed blacks, whether free or slave, caused the Confederacy to ignore a potentially valuable source of manpower and adopt policies that would alienate public opinion outside the South. Although slaves served as military laborers prior to the bombardment of Fort Sumter, the Confederate States rejected any combat role for

Negroes, spurning even the services of Louisiana's free black militia, which traced its origins beyond General Jackson's defense of New Orleans in the War of 1812."²⁹ However, noted abolitionist Frederick Douglass saw things differently. "It is now pretty well established," wrote Douglass, "that there are at the present

moment many colored men in the Confederate army doing duty not only as cooks, servants, and laborers, but as real soldiers, having muskets on their shoulders, and bullets in their pockets, ready to shoot down loyal troops, and do all that soldiers may do to destroy the Federal Government and build up that of the traitors and rebels."³⁰

In his 1999 doctoral dissertation on the Confederate debate over arming the slaves, Philip D. Dillard asserts that, "From the first shots at Fort Sumter, a few southern leaders had expressed interest in the idea of slaves serving in confederate gray. Most notably, the Alabama legislature discussed the idea in late 1863 and General Patrick Cleburne recommended the emancipation and conscription of all slaves in the wake of the Chattanooga campaign. Despite these early and very tentative initiatives, few southerners seriously considered arming slaves until the fall of 1864. From November of that year to March 1865, the Confederacy and its citizens conducted an open, thorough debate to define the role of the slave in the war effort."³¹

The *Official Records*, *The Rebellion Record*, and *The Journal of the Confederate Congress* all document various aspects of this controversy. E. A. Pollard, editor of the *Richmond Examiner*, wrote in 1866 that, "The question divided the country. The slaveholding interest, in its usual narrow spirit—in its old character of a greedy, vulgar, insolent aristocracy—took the alarm, and in Congress and in the newspapers, proclaimed that the use of negroes as soldiers was the entering wedge of Abolition; that it would stultify the whole cause of the Confederacy; . . ." ³²

sentiment, southern pride and southern honor." ³⁴

On the other hand, General Patrick Cleburne is famous for having supported the idea. "Will the slaves fight?—the experience of this war has been so far, that half-trained Negroes have fought as bravely as many half-trained Yankees," wrote Cleburne. The general argued that "the Confederacy should immediately announce the gradual but complete eradication of slavery, gaining access to a source of military manpower and at the same time removing an issue that kept European nations ... from supporting

ing the war." *The Rebellion Record* quotes from the Atlanta, Georgia, *Intelligencer and Confederacy* the following passage, urging upon the rebel commanders the necessity of arming the slaves: "We must 'fight the devil with fire,' by arming our negroes to fight the Yankees. There is no doubt that in Georgia alone we could pick up ten thousand negroes that would rejoice in meeting fifteen thousand Yankees in deadly conflict. We would be willing almost to risk the fate of the South upon such an encounter in an open field." ³⁶

Throughout 1864, as the prospect of a Confederate victory grew progressively dimmer, President Davis continued to resist the arming of slaves. However, he was willing to enroll 40,000 of them as military laborers, granting them freedom on completion of their period of service.

THE ROLE OF THE CONFEDERATE CONGRESS

In November 1864 Jefferson Davis in his message to the Confederate Congress recognized that the time might come when slaves would be needed in the Confederate army: "The subject is to be viewed by us, therefore, solely in the light of policy and our social economy. When so regarded I must dissent from those who advise a general levy and arming of slaves for the duty of soldiers. Until our white population shall prove insufficient for the armies we require and can afford to keep the field, to employ as a soldier the Negro, who has merely been trained to labor, and as a laborer under the white man, accustomed from his youth to the use of firearms, would scarcely be deemed wise or advantageous by any; and this is the question before us." ³⁷

Shortly thereafter in the Confederate House of Representatives, Henry Cousins Chambers introduced a motion in which he declared that the Confederacy did not need the assistance of black troops. Chambers felt that the whole matter hinged upon the simple question, "Are we approximating exhaustion?" Chambers continued that "he was ashamed to debate the question. All nature cries out against it. The negro race was ordained to slavery by the Almighty. Emancipation would be the destruction of our social and political system. God forbid that this Trojan horse should be introduced among us." ³⁸ John Goode, Jr.,



Patrick Cleburne (left). Fellow senior officers were horrified when Cleburne proposed the abolition of slavery and the recruitment of blacks into the Confederate army. General Patton Anderson (center): arming the slaves was a "monstrous proposition, revolting to southern sentiment, southern pride, and southern honor." Howell Cobb (right): "The day you make them soldiers would be the beginning of the end of the revolution."

One of the most outspoken military opponents to the arming of slaves was General Howell Cobb of Georgia. "You can't keep white and black troops together and you can't trust Negroes by themselves," wrote Cobb. "Use all the Negroes you can get for all purposes for which you need them but don't arm them." Cobb also believed that "the day you make them soldiers would be the beginning of the end of the revolution." Confederate Secretary of War James Seddon also opposed the idea. "If all white men capable of bearing arms are put in the field," Seddon stated, "it would be as large a draft as a community could continuously sustain, and whites are better soldiers than Negroes. For war, when existence is staked, the best material should be used." ³³ General Patton Anderson, also an opponent, declared that the idea of arming the slaves was a "monstrous proposition revolting to southern

southern independence through diplomacy and commerce." To Cleburne, the preservation of the Confederate nation was well worth the price of abolishing slavery. Judah P. Benjamin, secretary of state, also supported the arming of slaves and asked, "Is it better for the negro to fight for us or against us?" While yet another supporter, Samuel Clayton from Georgia, wrote: "The recruits should come from our Negroes, nowhere else. We should away with pride of opinion, away with false pride, and promptly take hold of all the means God has placed within our reach to help us through this struggle—a war for the right of self-government. Some people say that Negroes will not fight. I say they will fight." ³⁵

The Southern press also echoed conflicting views on the controversy. The *Charleston Mercury* predicted that "if the slaves were armed, South Carolina could no longer have any interest in prosecut-

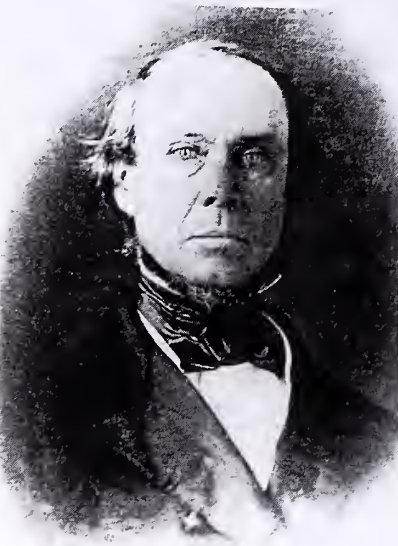
of Virginia was also opposed to the employment of blacks as soldiers under any circumstances, since it was a concession of weakness to the enemy. He railed against it well, because he believed it would end in abolition, a thought which he saw as anathema and degrading to the Confederacy.

Early in 1865, however, Jefferson Davis began to face the need for arming the slaves. "All arguments as to the positive advantage or disadvantage of employing [blacks] are beside the question," wrote Davis, "which is simply one of relative advantage between having their fighting element in our ranks or in those of the enemy."³⁹ During this same time period, General Robert E. Lee wrote that the Confederacy should employ blacks without delay. "I believe that with proper regulations they may be made efficient soldiers. They possess the physical qualifications in a marked degree. . . . Such an interest we can give our Negroes by giving immediate freedom to all who enlist, and freedom at the end of the war to the families of those who discharge their duties faithfully (whether they survive or not), together with the privilege of residing at the South."⁴⁰ In a letter to the Hon. Andrew Hunter on January 11, 1865, Lee remarked, "I think, therefore, we must decide whether slavery shall be extinguished by our enemies and the slaves be used against us, or use them ourselves at the risk of the effects which may be produced upon our social institutions. My own opinion is that we should employ them without delay..."

It wasn't until March 13, 1865, that the Confederate Congress passed an act enrolling slaves in the Confederate army. The act's preamble reads: "An Act to increase the Military Force of the Confederate States: The Congress of the Confederate States of America so enact, that, in order to provide additional forces to repel invasion, maintain the rightful possession of the Confederate States, secure their independence and preserve their institution, the President be, and he is hereby authorized to ask for and accept from the owners of slaves, the services of such number of able-bodied Negro men as he may deem expedient, for and during the war, to perform military service in whatever capacity he may direct..."⁴¹

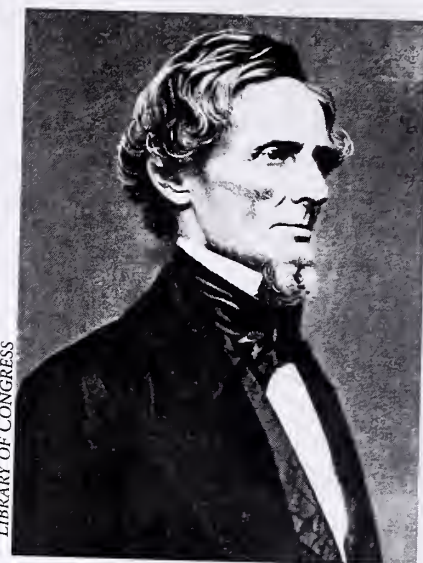
Jefferson Davis responded to the Congressional action in typical fashion

SOUTH CAROLINA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, CHARLESTON



Robert Barnwell Rhett (left), publisher of the *Charleston Mercury*: "If the slaves were armed, South Carolina could no longer have interest in prosecuting the war." Jefferson Davis (right): "I must dissent from those who advise a general levy and arming of slaves for the duty of soldiers."

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by criticizing the long delay in the passing of this legislation: "The bill for employing negroes as soldiers has not yet reached me, though the printed journals of your proceedings inform me of its passage," carped Davis. "Much benefit is anticipated from this measure, though far less than would have resulted from its adoption at an earlier date, so as to afford time for their organization and instruction during the winter months."

The Confederate Congress, however, was not willing to shoulder all of the blame for the postponement of the legislation and responded by implying hypocrisy on Davis' part: "That a law so radical in its character, so repugnant to the prejudices of our people, and so intimately affecting the organism of society, should encounter opposition and receive tardy sanction, ought not to excite surprise, but if the policy and necessity of the measure had been seriously urged on Congress by an Executive message, legislative action might have been quickened. The President, in no official communication to Congress, has recommended the passage of a law putting slaves into the Army as soldiers, and the message under consideration is the first official information that such a law would meet his approval."⁴²

E.A. Pollard's observations, however, were very critical of the Confederate Congress. "The Congress of the Confederate States was a weak, spasmodic body," he wrote. "There was no organization of opinion in it; no leaders; plenty of idle

debate, capricious measures, weak re- crimination, and but little of the sense and order of legislative assemblies. It went in and out of secret session almost every twenty-four hours; it was fruitful of propositions without results; and it finally adjourned on the 18th of March, after a session of four months, in which it had failed to enact any effective measure to recruit the army, to improve the finances, to mobilize the subsistence of the country, or, in fact, to serve one single important interest in the Confederacy."⁴³

During the last desperate days of the war, the Confederate Congress did indeed approve the enlistment of blacks as soldiers and while a few companies drilled in Virginia, there is no convincing evidence they saw action.

WHY SUPPORT THE CONFEDERACY?

Richard Rollins does an impressive job examining the reasons why some black Southerners supported the Confederacy. First, the South was home. "[S]ome of the 4,000,000 who lived there had roots going back over 200 years," and many felt a strong attachment to their home state or town and had a sense of community responsibility. Second, many hoped and believed that this would be their ticket to freedom; they questioned, in fact, whether the racial grass was actually greener in the North. Third, many free blacks in the South had strong economic reasons for supporting the Confederacy. Indeed, according to Rollins, "In 1860 in

Charleston alone they owned \$500,00 in property [while] in 1830 approximately 1,556 black slaveowners in the deep South owned 7,188 slaves." Some slaves even had economic reasons, as their skilled labor was in high demand and brought impressive sums. And finally, some young black Southerners viewed the war as simply a great adventure.⁴⁴

HOW MANY BLACK CONFEDERATES FOUGHT?

During the recent controversies surrounding the Confederate flag, many people suggested the building of a monument to black Confederate combatants as a testimonial to their number and significance. Yet there is no agreement as to numbers. Estimates range wildly, from those who contend that as many as 30,000 blacks fought for the South to those who disagree vehemently, saying that no more than 100 were soldiers. The preeminent historian of the Civil War, Princeton's James McPherson, describes the number of 30,000 as "pure fantasy," while Edward Bearss, historian emeritus at the National Park Service, contends that that number is "wishful thinking."

One of the most popularly used anecdotes regarding the number of black Confederates comes from the diary of Dr. Lewis Steiner, a member of the United States Sanitary Commission. Steiner observed a Confederate army he estimated at 64,000 march through Frederick, Maryland, en route to Sharpsburg. "Over 3,000 Negroes must be included in that number," he wrote. "These were clad in all kinds of uniforms, not only in cast-off or captured United States uniforms, but in coats with Southern buttons, State buttons, etc. These were shabby, but not shabbier or seedier than those worn by white men in the rebel ranks. Most of the negroes had arms, rifles, muskets, sabres, bowie-knives, dirks, etc. They were supplied, in many instances, with knapsacks, haversacks, canteens, etc.; and were manifestly an integral portion of the Southern Confederacy army. They were seen riding on horses and mules, driving wagons, riding on caissons, in ambulances, with the staff of Generals, and promiscuously mixed up with all the rebel horde. The fact was patent, and rather interesting when considered in connection with the horror rebels express at the suggestion of black soldiers being employed for the National defence."⁴⁵ Many people

have accepted Steiner's figures and, from that, calculated that five percent of the southern army was black. Assuming that there were 750,000 southern soldiers in total, the next leap in logic is to conclude that five percent of that total was black; hence, the figure that approaches 30,000 African-Americans in the Confederate army.

But some historians contend that if you examine Steiner's diary or other anecdotal material closely, there is no evidence that proves that these men were soldiers, as opposed to laborers or body servants who carried their master's weap-

ons and gear. If so, Steiner's numbers work out to about one body servant for every twenty soldiers, which is a credible ratio.

Another widely cited example is that of a Dr. Chambliss. "In Richmond, a Dr. Chambliss raised a battalion among the hospital workers at Chimborazo," claimed Patrick R. Massengill at a talk for the Rocky Mountain Civil War Round Table in Denver in October 1991, "and these men were seen drilling in the Capitol square, wearing new blue/gray jean trousers and red battle shirts. Major Turner, the commander of another Ne-

A DIFFERENT VALOR

The photograph shows Sergeant Andrew Chandler, 44th Mississippi Infantry, and his servant, Silas Chandler. It is not known if Silas took part in combat, but he certainly served Andrew faithfully throughout the war. The following is the account of their wartime experience, published in Richard Rollins, *Black Southerners in Gray*, and written by Sergeant Chandler's great grandson, Andrew Chandler Bataille, of Belden, Mississippi:



AT AGE SIXTEEN MY GREAT GRANDFATHER, Andrew Martin Chandler, pictured on left, volunteered for service with Company F, 44th Mississippi Regiment on August 8, 1861. He took with him his body servant Silas Chandler, pictured on right. They were of the same approximate age at the time of enlistment.

On 12 September their unit was transferred into Confederate service. They participated together in several campaigns including the Battle of Belmont, Missouri on November 7, 1861; Shiloh, Tennessee, April 6 and 7, 1862; Murfreesboro, Tennessee, December 30, 1862 and January 1, 1863; and Chickamauga, Georgia, September 19 and 20, 1863. At the Battle of Shiloh Andrew Martin Chandler was captured and sent to a Union prisoner of war camp at Camp

Chase, Ohio. In August of 1862 he was released in a prisoner exchange. It is unknown whether Silas was also captured and accompanied him to Ohio.

Upon his release, Andrew and Silas returned to Confederate service. Andrew M. Chandler was seriously wounded in the leg and foot at the Battle of Chickamauga in September 1863. Silas faithfully stayed by Andrew Martin and accompanied him to a hospital in Atlanta where he assisted in his nursing and care until his family was able to come from Mississippi and assist them both in returning home. It is very likely that without Silas' help and assistance, his master's life would have been in jeopardy.

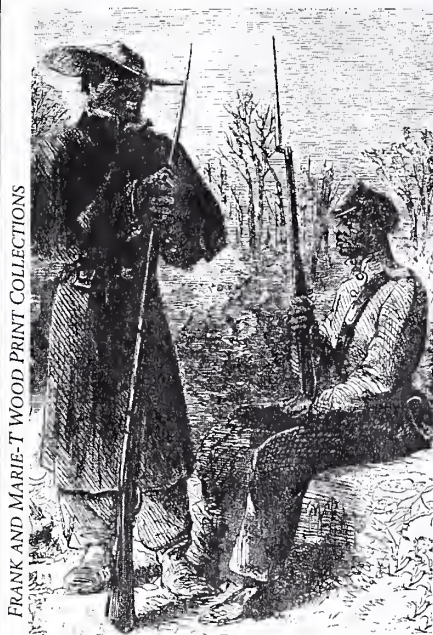
After the war they returned to Mississippi. Silas received a pension from the State of Mississippi which was paid by the state to Confederate Veterans. Andrew gave him some land and the money to build a church, which still stands. These two Mississippians were likely childhood playmates. They were prematurely thrust into adult roles and went off together to experience the adventure and horror of war. It is not difficult to speculate that, as a result of sharing those very trying life experiences, a special bond existed between them.

Over the generations Andrew Martin's family has lost touch with Silas' family. A couple of years ago my wife and sons and I had a moving and emotional experience. We had the pleasure of visiting by phone with Silas' great grandson, Bobbie Chandler, who now resides in Washington D.C. For us, it was truly as if we had been reunited with a missing part of our family. Bobbie Chandler still returns to Mississippi to visit relatives and it is our hope that we will be able to meet with him and his relatives and renew the bonds that existed between our ancestors.

EDITORIAL NOTE: The DC and Mississippi Chandlers have since met, and are in regular touch with one another.

gro battalion wrote: 'The knowledge of the military art they already exhibit was something remarkable. They move with evident pride and satisfaction to themselves.' Both these units saw action: Chambliss' men fought against Sheridan's cavalry in their March 1865 raid around Richmond. And on April 4th, on the retreat toward Appomattox, a Union courier reported seeing a company of Blacks working on breastworks . . . they belonged to the only company of colored troops in the Confederate service, having been enlisted by Major Turner in Richmond." The website on which this information is posted, however, cites no sources.⁴⁶

Yet another interesting anecdote can be found in *The Rebellion Record*—a report made by Union Colonel James A. Mulligan: "A soldier of ours, James A. Walker, company H, Second Maryland regiment, captured in the attack upon the



A sketch from a Northern newspaper of two Negro soldiers serving as Confederate pickets, as purportedly seen by a Federal officer through his field glass at Fredericksburg, Virginia, in January 1863.

train at the Moorfield and Alleghany Junction, on the third instant, by the enemy under general Fitz-Hugh Lee, escaped when near Brocka's Gap, on the fifth instant, and reported to me this morning. He informs me that thirteen of the enemy were killed and twenty wounded, in the skirmish. He also states that there was present under the command of General Fitz-Hugh Lee, three companies of negro troops, cavalry, armed with carbines. They were not en-

gaged in the attack, but stationed with the reserve. The guards, he reports, openly admitted to the prisoners that they were accompanied by negro soldiers, stating, however, that the North had shown the example." However, nowhere in the records is there any mention of such companies; perhaps the guards were simply pulling the legs of their gullible Yankee prisoners.⁴⁷

As Tony Horwitz, author of the best selling *Confederates in the Attic*, has ably explained, part of the dilemma rests in the fact that we know much more about black Union soldiers than their counterparts in the South. There is clear documentation concerning the black regiments that served in the Union army, with specific information on each unit. There is photo-documentation as well, substantiating, without question, that black soldiers fought for the Union. For black Confederates there is merely an abundance of anecdotal material, which is nonetheless impressive, and "sketchy accounts describing what appeared to be blacks acting as soldiers," according to Horwitz.⁴⁸

One would think that the Confederate enlistment records would at least shed light on the controversy over black Confederates, if not actually resolve the issue. But to further muddy the waters, the Confederate records are not nearly as comprehensive as those of the Union, since many were lost or destroyed. Extensive though they still are, Confederate records provide no hard evidence that black southerners served as soldiers. Comments by many prominent historians support this observation. Robert Krick, chief historian for the National Park Service at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville and author of ten books on the Confederacy, has gone through Confederate service records for some 200,000 soldiers. In an interview with Tony Horwitz, Krick said he saw evidence of "six, or twelve at the very most" black Rebels. Joseph Glatthaar concurred. "I've read through roughly 1,500 manuscript collections," he commented, "and I haven't seen one soldier mention [black Confederates]. You'd think, if this was a real issue, I'd have come across it somewhere." Nor did James McPherson find any evidence of black soldiers fighting for the Confederacy in the over 25,000 letters he read from northern and southern soldiers alike. "I've seen no reference to

any black person actually fighting," McPherson told Horwitz. In the Union letters he read, McPherson adds "I've seen maybe four or five references to what they perceived as individual black soldiers" fighting against them. But McPherson and others explain that southern soldiers were often "filthy and sunburned, and that corpses quickly blackened on the battlefield," which may have confused Union soldiers about what they actually saw.⁴⁹

Clearly, then, if one sets aside anecdotal information and relies exclusively upon only the hardest of documentation, a strong case could be, and has been, made by some academic historians, that no more than a very small number of blacks fought for the Confederacy. "There seems to be no evidence that the Negro soldiers authorized by the Confederate Government ever went into battle," wrote Wiley in *Southern Negroes*. "It is possible that some of the free Negro companies organized in Louisiana and Tennessee in the early part of the war took part in local engagements; but evidence seems to the contrary. If they did, their action was not authorized by the Confederate government." But, in truth, such might not provide a complete picture. For instance, there is a possibility that light-skinned black Confederate soldiers "passed," perhaps with the quiet knowledge of their white counterparts. "A company of 'Creoles,' some of whom had Negro blood, may have been accepted in the Confederate service at Mobile," Wiley continued. "Secretary Seddon conditioned his authorization of the acceptance of the company on the ability of those 'Creoles' to be naturally and properly distinguished from Negroes. If persons with Negro blood served in Confederate ranks as full-fledged soldiers, the percent of Negro blood was sufficiently low for them to pass as whites."⁵⁰ Another possibility is that, in a wave of postwar racial antipathy, black Confederate soldiers were simply purged from the records.

Clearly black Southerners made a major contribution to the Confederate war effort—in a support capacity as body servants, cooks, musicians, laborers, but perhaps also on occasion as armed soldiers. Indeed, "In spite of long years of controversy with its argument of racial inferiority," writes Charles Wesley, "out of the muddle of fact and fancy came the deliberate decision to employ Negro

troops. This act, in itself, as a historical fact, refuted the former theories of southern statesmen. The Negro was thus a factor in both the Union and Confederate armies in the War of the Rebellion." □

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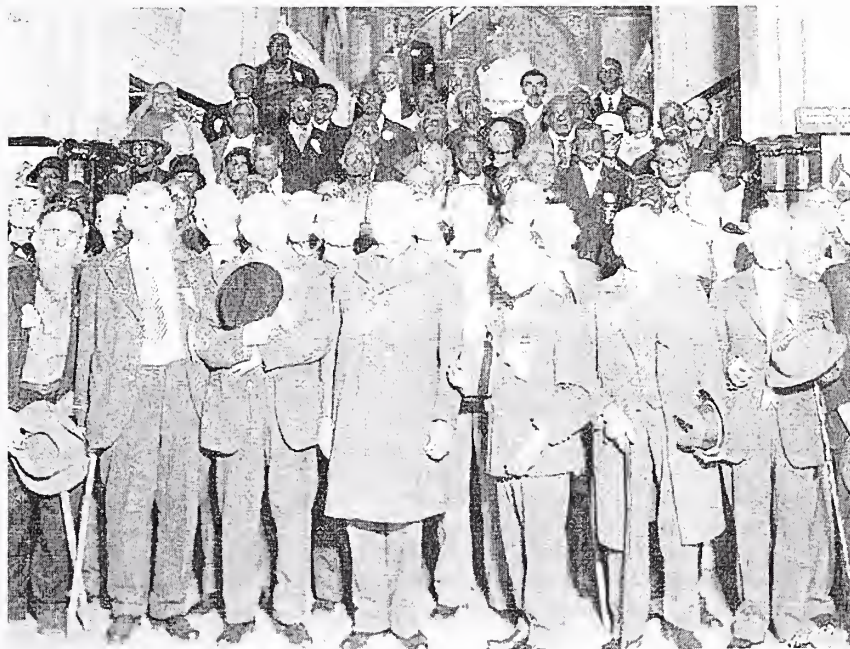
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Alabama Confederate Veterans Reunion 1890. Blacks who had served with the Confederate army, even if not regularly enrolled, were welcome at many veteran reunions.

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